

FIRST REBELS

*Strictly Confidential Note on the Growth of
the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal*

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INTRODUCTION

Daly's Note on the growth of the revolutionary movement in Bengal roughly covers the first decade of this century. Roughly, for two reasons ; the Note is dated 7 August 1911, and it often goes back into the nineteenth century to trace the origin of some contemporary developments. For instance, the boycott movement of 1905 reminds Daly of earlier efforts to start emporiums for the sale of India-made goods, the first of which was set up in 1891. He also mentions Tagore's Swadeshi Bhandar, opened in 1897, and records that they were all genuine efforts to encourage national industries and were not tokens of open hostility towards the British Government.

The Note is not strictly confined to Bengal either. To place his theme in perspective he has dealt with revolutionary activities in Maharashtra and Benares. Even the murder of Rand and Ayerst in 1897 in Poona finds mention in his Note. A significant omission is Punjab where also revolutionaries were active during the period and had links with their opposite numbers in Bengal. A reference to Ajit Singh, an extremist leader, who had been deported from Punjab in 1907, occurs in the famous "Sweet" letter. One of the annexures to his Note, though, deals at length with the Arya Samaj movement and its founder, Dayanand Saraswati.

Moreover, the Bengal of his Note is pre-partition Bengal, though the revolutionary movement he deals with began after Curzon's partition of the province. The revolutionaries of Dacca and Mymensingh, the Anushilan Samiti of Pulin Das, and the Barisal of Aswini Datta did not come strictly under his domain ; they belonged to the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Although Daly's report deals by and large with the period of two Bengals—it ends only a few months before the Royal Proclamation at the Delhi durbar annulling partition—, it seems he had not been able to adjust himself mentally to the new set-up. His Bengal still included Eastern Bengal, one of the reasons for which might have been the gross administrative inadequacy of the new, soon-to-die province.

Some credit appears to be due to Daly for describing the theme of his Note as revolutionary movement in preference to terrorist or seditious activities, although he leaves no one in doubt about which side of the fence he is and how thoroughly he detests the men and the movement whose chronicler he is. The Note is a compendium of significant political events, open and secret, but the emphasis is understandably on the secret. As a result, the broad common current has been almost wholly lost sight of. The anti-partition movement has been dealt with cursorily, because "a comprehensive narrative of the growth of the agitation" up to the end of 1905 was submitted by the Special Branch in January 1906. But the revolutionary movement in Bengal cannot be understood in isolation from the anti-partition agitation. Lord Curzon's scheme was a challenge, and the anti-partition agitation and the revolutionary movement of the period were the response. After partition had been annulled, the revolutionary movement in Bengal entered a new phase virtually under a brand new leadership.

Bengalis were the first in this country to take to English education. Hindu College started functioning in 1817, and Serampore College was founded the following year. In the early decades of the century, the educated Bengali, subsequently somewhat derisively described as "Bhadralok", belonged to what Macaulay called a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. The Sepoy Mutiny passed him by, although the first banner of revolt was reportedly raised in this State for which Mangal Pande paid with his life. Nor did the Bengali bhadralok play any role worth mentioning in the subsequent mass-movements that erupted from time to time in different parts of Bengal against the Raj or the system it fostered. The Bengali middle class is immensely proud of the Indigo Rebellion, but its contribution to the movement was, at most, marginal. Although some prominent middle-class leaders like Sisirkumar Ghosh, Harish Chandra Mukhopadhyaya, Bishnucharan Biswas and Digambar Biswas sided with the rebellious peasants out of a spirit of humanism, the help they rendered the movement was

purely as individuals. Far from joining the rebellion, the middle class as a class opposed the rebellion and assisted the indigo planters in many ways. (*Bharater Krishak-Bidroha O Ganantrik Sangram*—Suprakash Roy)

Not that the English-educated Bengali did not participate in any kind of collective action. He revelled in reformatory movements, movements which had no quarrel with the fundamentals of the system introduced. For all his intense nationalism even the great Vidyasagar did not consciously try for ending the British rule. He sought and received the cooperation of the government of the day for legal recognition of marriage of Hindu widows and abolition of polygamy among Hindus. It was this aspect of Vidyasagar that was seized upon by Naxals, ignoring his role as an agent of change, as an active advocate of modernity in an essentially feudal and static society, to debunk him. The Temperance movement, which was launched by Peary Churn Sircar and was supported, among others, by Vidyasagar and Keshab Chandra Sen, was again an essay in petitions. The Bengali middle-class spirit of the time was neatly summed up in Keshab Chandra Sen's complaint in London more than 100 years ago in pursuance of the Temperance movement: "If you have taught us Shakespeare and Milton, have you not also taught us the use of brandy and of beer?" (Quoted in *Socio-Political Currents in Bengal* by Bhabani Bhattacharya) Even Ram Mohan Roy and the early Tagores were no exception. It was the age of petition for bhadraloks of Bengal

The age of petition was also the age of reformation. The immediate consequence of the Bengal Renaissance, an offshoot of the Bengali-European contact, was a total repudiation of Bengali Hindu values by those who learnt at the feet of Derozio. The young man who greeted the image of goddess Kali with a "Good morning, madam" was typical of the clan remembered in history as Young Bengal. The fault was not theirs, though. Making a distinction between the "great European Renaissance" and the "parochial Bengal Renaissance", Atul Gupta wrote that a majority of those Europeans who brought Bengal in contact with European civilisation and were its most

enthusiastic propagandists laid great emphasis on the religious or Christian aspect of their civilisation. It appears that they somehow came to think that the Europe of reason and knowledge has some esoteric connection with the Christianity it professed and practised, and that the Indian heathens who did not accept that faith can have no entry into the world of European enlightenment", (Studies in the Bengal Renaissance). Understandably, in calling Hinduism to the bar of reason Young Bengal 'cut their way through ham and beef and waded through tumblers of beer.'

This iconoclasm gave rise to new defenders of the faith who sought to assimilate into the old system some of the salient features of the new. Vidyasagar and his fellow-reformers represented one aspect of this trend ; the other was represented by the Brahmo Samaj movement. Founded by Rammohan Roy in 1828, the Brahmo Samaj grew rapidly in the last three decades of the nineteenth century. "Out of the clash of cultures, Western and Indian, the Brahmo Samaj emerged as the new synthesis of the age, responding immediately to the needs of the class destined to rise to power in the new society." (The Brahmo Samaj—Jogananda Das in Studies in the Bengal Renaissance) Rammohan had no use for a 'negative war' like the Derozians waged ; he preached a synthesis in the shape of a universal religion in which "a Hindu while remaining a Hindu will become a true Hindu, a Christian while remaining a Christian will become a true Christian, a Mussalman while remaining a Mussalman will become a true Mussalman, and so on, all combining together in a common universal brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God." Clearly, the Brahmo Samaj movement was not rebellious ; it was reformative and, maybe, to an extent, restorative. It was meant primarily for Hindus with deep-rooted religious loyalty who welcomed the free thinking and spirit of inquiry of the West but were resistant to evangelism and attempts at proselytisation. Naturally, the Brahmo Samaj received "an enthusiastic response from the intelligentsia, the merchants, and the new feudal-bourgeois zemindars of the British regime, as distinct from the purely feudal zemindars who were going out of

picture one after another in quick succession due to an epidemic of auctions by the East India Company of the *lakheraj* or rent-free estate (Jogananda Das) ; in short, the admirers and collaborators of the British, the beneficiaries of the Raj, the emerging middle class, the new *bhadralok*.

It is difficult to say when the rapport was first disturbed and how. Maybe the process was slow, and a combination of events over a period of years contributed to the disenchantment. The Kooka slaughter of 1872 which revealed the much-vaunted British justice in its true colour, the Delhi Assemblage of 1877, an imperial pageant held at a time when a cyclone had taken a toll of a quarter-million lives in Bengal and millions were starving in the South, struck by a terrible famine, the repeal of the protective duty of five per cent on cotton goods imported from abroad to help English manufacturers, the Vernacular Press Act, the concerted European opposition to the original Ilbert Bill seeking to give Indian district officers equal power with their European colleagues, all this might have combined to drive a formidable wedge. The Bengali *bhadralok* had special reasons to feel hurt and betrayed for nowhere in India was the opposition to the Ilbert Bill so powerful as in Bengal, where it had the warm sympathy of the Lt-Governor, Sir Rivers Thompson, an avowed enemy of the policy of Lord Ripon. "All the High Court Judges in Calcutta, with the exception of Romesh Chandra Mitter, denounced the Bill. Almost all district officers were against it. The main opposition, however, came from official Europeans—lawyers, merchants and indigo-planters. Lord Ripon became the subject of unrestrained abuse and insult." (*Socio-Political Currents in Bengal* – Bhabani Bhattacharya).

It is doubtful if any credit attaches to the Bengali for taking to English education and imbibing through it western thought and culture ahead of others in the country. The simple reason may be that Calcutta was the headquarters of the Company and the capital of India for the greater part of British rule. When the emerging middle classes in other provinces were struggling with their English, the Bengali *bhadralok* had become an adept petitioner. Bengalis dominated not only the Indian Civil Service,

but also the Indian National Congress the majority of whose presidents in the early years of the organisation were Bengalis. When Aurobindo struck against the Congress he lashed at its leaders, "the Bonnarjis and Banerjis and 'Lalmohan' Ghoshes", all Bengalis, who "have climbed into the rarefied atmosphere of the Legislative Council and lost all hold on the imagination of the young men". (*The Genesis of Extremism*—Ramesh Chandra Majumdar in *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*) The dominant role of the Bengali in the Congress, his undisputed leadership in the age of petition, his clamour for rights and equality in the eye of the law leading on occasion to brushes with authority, all this must have made his one-time patron lose faith in his reliability and turn to the emerging middle classes in other provinces. The Bengali as the agent of the Raj was dethroned.

With the partition of Bengal, alienation was total. The new middle class in Bengal was based on land, on professions and on public services. The Bengal British India Society, an organisation primarily of Derozians, and the Landholders' Association of the big zemindars were merged in the British Indian Association in 1851. The aristocracy of intelligence combined with the aristocracy of wealth to form "the first united front of the politically-minded educated Indians." For the next 25 years it was the only organised body in Bengal with a political programme. "It met often and it often petitioned the Government, but political agitation was beyond its purview." The need for a central political organisation, which could not be fulfilled by the British India Association, was felt before long. In 1875, the Indian League was formed, and *The Englishman* described it as "the first marked sign of the awakening of the people on this side of India to political life." The seceders from the Indian League formed the Indian Association a year later. At the inaugural meeting Chandra Nath Bose, a well-known literary figure of the time, declared that the Association would never hesitate to agitate for the redress of grievances and wrongs. Other associations had all been instituted to serve a particular purpose, but the Association which they were about to inaugurate would embrace everything that would conduce to the well-

being of the country and countrymen as a whole. (*History of the Indian Association*—J. C. Bagal)

The partition proved a great unifier—at least till Curzon's tour of Eastern Bengal in the course of which he won over many Muslim leaders, including Nawab Salimullah of Dacca, who had, at first, denounced the proposal of partition as a "bastardly arrangement." The Nawab became an ardent convert when Curzon gave him a loan of £100,000 from the public exchequer. The Indian Association had naturally a leading role in the anti-partition agitation, but other associations, like the British Indian Association and the Landholders Association formed a year ago, were also in it. For the first time the united front of the aristocracy of intelligence and the aristocracy of wealth was up against the British Government. According to data collected by the Indian Association, from December 1903 to October 1905 more than 2,000 public meetings attended by 500 to 50,000 people, both Hindus and Mussalmans, were held in different parts of East Bengal and West Bengal to protest against the partition. (J. C. Bagal). Though resolutions passed at these meetings were all sent to the Secretary of State, and petitions and memoranda continued to be submitted to the Government, it was evident that the age of petition was coming to an end and the age of mass movement setting in.

The revolt of the zemindars over the partition scheme was not prompted by any patriotic considerations, but their deviation from the accustomed posture brought them a great deal of unearned praise. The Permanent Settlement of 1793, which gave rise to absentee landlordism and helped the emergence of a leisured class having the time and money for intellectual pursuits that contributed considerably to the so-called Bengal Renaissance, was sought to be nullified in Eastern Bengal by the partition scheme. "By this partition, the eastern half of the province, containing the rice producing area, was placed under the administration of a newly created Provincial Government, with the power to revise the old system of taxation. Thus arose a new conflict between the Government and the rich landholding class, which contained a large number

of intellectuals.” (*Indian in Transition*—M. N. Roy) The united front of aristocrats had an economic compulsion.

Pre-partition Bengal was the largest and most populous province of India. With 48 districts spread over an area of nearly 190,000 square miles and with a population of 78 million, the province then included Bengal proper, Bihar, Orissa, and Chota Nagpur. The partition scheme was originally part of a package proposal for reorganisation of several provinces for mainly administrative reasons. But political considerations were dominant in the case of Bengal. “While lacking the sensitivity to understand the basis of developments which were occurring in Indian society, Curzon fully grasped the threat posed by the growing reaction against European dominance. In particular he appreciated the danger which lay in the growth of aggressive nationalism among the two most politically advanced groups, the Maratha Brahmin of the Bombay Deccan and the Bengali bhadralok.” Curzon opposed the accretion of the quiescent and politically isolated Maratha districts to Bombay which would have “multiplied the forces of our enemies.” In the case of Bengal, “the object became one of dividing an already united elite. Just as Poona and Nagpur were to be kept apart, so also were Calcutta and Dacca to be separated.” (*British Policy and Administration in Bengal*—Richard Paul Cronin)

Home Secretary Risley’s initial draft of his famous letter of December 1903 included the political motives, but Curzon objected to their publication on the ground that what he could safely say in the privacy of the Council Chamber was not necessarily suitable for proclamation on house-tops. Curzon revised the draft from beginning to end, omitting all mention of the political advantages to be gained from severing Dacca and the eastern districts from Calcutta. In his reply to the criticisms of the partition proposal Risley said the Congress point of view that the scheme involved loss of national unity pointed precisely to the political effectiveness of the scheme. “Bengal united is a power ; Bengal divided will pull several different ways. That is perfectly true and is one of the great merits of the scheme.” Risley attributed the agitation solely to the relatively small edu-

cated class. "He saw the organising centre of the agitation as Dacca, more specifically nearby Bikrampur, the old capital of the Sen kingdom. Bikrampur pargana, he wrote, "is said to supply nearly one-third of the subordinate native officials in the Government offices of Bengal." Risley conceded that men of the "Babu class" from this area would indeed suffer reduced prospects should Bengal be partitioned, and he openly welcomed such a development. "The chances are that the clerical classes will lose.... The only answer to the objection of the 'Bangals', as the people of the eastern districts are called in colloquial Bengali, is that they have had more than their share of appointments in the past and must be content for the future with what they can get." (Risley, note, February 1904 ; quoted by Cronin).

The political necessity of dismemberment of Bengal was fully recognised by Curzon. In a letter to the Secretary of State on 17 February 1904 he wrote : "The Bengalis who like to think themselves a nation, and who dream of future, when English would have been turned out, and a Bengali Babu will be installed in Government House, Calcutta of course, bitterly resent any disruption that will be likely to interfere with the realisation of this dream. If we are weak enough to yield to their demand now, we shall not be able to dismember Bengal again ; and you will be cementing and solidifying, on the eastern flank of India, a force almost formidable, and certain to be a source of increasing trouble in future." (Curzon Papers ; quoted by Shila Sen in *Muslim Politics in Bengal*).

The other political objective of partition was to drive a wedge between Hindus and Muslims by showing special favour to Muslims of East Bengal through the creation of a Muslim majority province. This objective was spelt out by Curzon in his speeches during his tour of East Bengal to canvass support for his scheme. In a speech at Dacca he said : "Partition would make Dacca the centre and possibly the capital of a new and self-sufficing administration which must give to the people of these districts by reason of their numerical strength and superiority of culture preponderating voice in the province so created,

which would invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussalman Viceroys and Kings." (Curzon speeches ; quoted by Shila Sen) Curzon eminently succeeded in his aim to divide Hindus and Muslims. On the day after Bengal was partitioned, Nawab Salimullah called a Muslim provincial conference at Dacca, the first anniversary of partition was observed by Muslims of Eastern Bengal as "A day of happiness and rejoicing," and two months later, the All India Muslim League was formed at Dacca.

The twin objectives of partition, largely realised, had powerful impact on the mind of the Bengali bhadralok. His open activities took the form of agitation, and by and large he lost faith in his past practice of petitioning the Government. In open politics, partition was a setback for the moderates ; it gave national politics a push towards extremism. But its impact on secret, revolutionary politics was far more profound and far-reaching. Daly has noted that the first secret society in Bengal was formed about the year 1900 at a meeting attended by P. Mitter, Sarala Devi and Count Okakura. But secret societies came into existence long before that. A secret society called "Sanjivani Sabha" was formed by Raj Narayan Bose and Jyotirindra Nath Tagore as far back as 1878. "Even a callow youth like me was a member of the Sabha", wrote the Poet, who was 17 then. Another secret society was founded by Shibnath Shastri, and Bipin Chandra Pal recorded that "Calcutta student community was at that time (around 1875) honeycombed with secret organisations." But these secret societies had no plan of direct action ; they had no revolutionary motive. They aimed at ideological and physical training, their "thought and imagination alone were of a revolutionary character."

May be taking his cue from Raj Narayan Bose, his maternal grandfather, Aurobindo sent Jatindra Nath Banerji to Calcutta as his emissary to contact P. Mitter and Sarala Devi. According to Daly, Jatindra came to Calcutta in 1900 ; two years later arrived Barindra Kumar Ghose with the mission of setting up a revolutionary organisation. He toured the districts of Bengal

and returned to Baroda in 1903 apparently with the impression that Bengal was not yet ripe for his plan. During his one-year stay in Bengal Barin preached his views in many parts of the province and started clubs for lathi play in Dacca, Mymensingh, Rangpur, Dinajpur and other places, the object being "to stir up young people to take part in revolutionary work and free the country from the foreign yoke."

Neither the early samitis nor the first mission of Barin succeeded in creating a revolutionary fervour in Bengal. According to Charles Tegart, Calcutta's one time famous/notorious Commissioner of Police, the cold reception accorded to Barin on his first tour in Bengal was not surprising. "The youths to whom he preached belonged to a non-martial race. They had long lived in peace and had no reason to believe that they were under the heel of a tyrannical despotism which should be attacked or could be overthrown with bombs and revolvers. This was not a suitable atmosphere in which to preach wholesale murder. Something was required to rouse the people." (*Terrorism in India*—Sir Charles Tegart; quoted by David M. Laushey in *Bengal Terrorism and Marxist Left*).

This something was provided by the partition of Bengal, and Barin was successful during his second visit to the about-to-be-dismembered province in 1904. By that time Aurobindo had finished his tract "Bhawani Mandir," setting forth the ideas which were sought to be given shape at Muraripukur Garden. Tegart has recorded in his book that when Barin returned to Bengal and renewed his organisational efforts in 1904-1905, "he found the province in the grip of an agitation of unparalleled bitterness. Bengal, a motherland once rich and famous, had been dismembered despite the protests of her children. Bengali acceptance of the insult was contrasted with the brilliant valour shown by Japan against one of the proudest of European nations. Had Bengalis no religion, no patriotism? In such a favourable atmosphere Barin renewed his efforts with marked determination and laid the foundations of the terrorist societies, based on perverted religion and equally perverted patriotism."

A rapid growth of revolutionary violence was only one aspect of the Bengali *bhadralok*'s reaction to the political motives of partition. Another aspect was an abrupt retreat from religious reforms and anti-Hinduism and a return to orthodoxy. Possibly the tilt towards the Muslims in the partition plan, the British attempt to use the Muslims to decimate the overwhelmingly Hindu, Bengali middle class, and the readiness of Muslims to be used as a willing tool of alien rulers had something to do with this resurgence of Hinduism. Maharashtra was already showing the way. The Ganapati and Shivaji festivals of Maharashtra, which have been described by the Sedition Committee as first indications of a revolutionary movement, had unmistakably anti-Muslim overtones. Public Ganapati festivals, the Sedition Committee says in its report, appear to have arisen out of an anti-Muhammadan movement started after riots which broke out in the city of Bombay in 1893 between Hindus and Muhammadans. The first Shivaji festival became an annual observance at which stirring speeches were delivered recalling the prowess of the leader who revolted against the foreign domination of the Muhammadans. The application of the moral derived from Shivaji's successful struggle against the Muhammadans to the present condition of India under British rule was a natural and easy step." Damodar and Balkrishna Chapekar's society for physical and military training was significantly called "Society for the removal of obstacles to the Hindu Religion." Apart from being of Brahminical origin—Tilak, Chapekar brothers and Savarkar brothers were all Chitpavan Brahmins (informatively, Nathuram Godse also was one)—the revolutionary movement in Maharashtra had a very practical reason to have a veneer of Hindu orthodoxy. The moderates, who held the sway in national politics at the time, were secular; the extremists, who sought to replace them under the leadership of Tilak and Aurobindo, had to take a different stance.

At this distance of time, it will do no harm to acknowledge that there is a great deal of truth in Farquhar's statement that the new nationalism was religious nationalism. "It is clear as noonday that the religious aspect of anarchism was merely an

extension of that revival of Hinduism which is the work of Dayananda, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and the Theosophists. Further, the historical is almost as close as the logical connection. Dayananda started the anti-cow-killing agitation in 1882. The movement grew until, in 1888, it had reached colossal proportions ; and in 1893 Tilak made it one of his most potent tools. Krishnavarma was a pupil of Dayananda ; Lajpat Rai was for many years one of the chief leaders of the Arya Samaj, and Vivekananda's brother Bhupendra was one of the most influential of the anarchist journalists of Calcutta. (Quoted by C. R. Cleveland, Director of Criminal Intelligence in *Introduction to Political Trouble in India* by James Campbell Kerr)

Aurobindo's contact with secret societies started while he was in England. He and his brothers became members of a secret society in London, called the "Lotus and Dagger", in which each member vowed to work for the liberation of India. This society was still-born. The revolutionary spirit in Maharashtra caught up with him while he was in Baroda, and in 1902-3, he joined a secret society "started in Western India with a Rajput noble as the head and this had a Council of five in Bombay with several prominent Maharashtra politicians as its members." It is reasonable to assume that Aurobindo's involvement in extremist politics of Maharashtra, his close association with Tilak prompted him to choose "Bhawani Mandir" as the title of his seminal revolutionary writing, which became the bible of all revolutionists in Bengal. Bhawani is one of the manifestations of Durga ; she was the tutelary goddess of Shivaji whose celebrated sword was also called Bhawani.

The Shivaji festival was introduced in Bengal also, though not with much success. Tilak himself was present at the Shivaji festival in Calcutta in 1906. But the movement did not catch on in Bengal in spite of advocacy by leaders like Bepin chandra Pal, who said that Shivaji was the symbol of a grand idea, the memory of a noble sentiment, the mouth-piece of a great movement. "That idea was the idea of a Hindu Rashtra, which would unite under one political bond, the whole of the Hindu people, united already by communities of traditions and scriptures."

Some people thought the name of Shivaji did not appeal to the Bengali because he was a distant hero, and a Bengali substitute may achieve the purpose. The choice fell on Pratapaditya, one of the "Baro Bhuyans" These festival did not fare much better either, but what is significant is the substitute hero also was a worshipper of Bhawani, a devout Hindu who waged war against the Mughal emperor.

The literature of revolution is full of Hindu revivalist ideas. In *Bartaman Rananiti* (The Modern Art of War), which preaches that war is inevitable when oppression cannot be stopped by any other means whatsoever, the names of Sri Krishna, Ramachandra, Chandi, and Kali in this Kali age, Kali holding two swords to destroy the "Mlechhas" have been invoked. *Sikher Balidan*, written by Kumudini Mitra, daughter of Krishna Kumar Mitra, editor of *Sanjibani*, was an account of some incidents "in the conflict between the Sikhs and their Mohammedan oppressors." It described Guru Teg Bahadur's firmness in the presence of Aurangzebe and his consequent imprisonment and execution, Surendra Nath Banerjea wrote in the *Bengalee* that "*Sikher Balidan*" is a book which ought to be in the hands of every schoolboy,...It should be in the hands of everybody who has his eyes open to the significance of the events that are passing around us."

Beerashami festival, Rakhi Bandhan and Raksha Kali Puja, which Bepinchandra Pal suggested should be performed "every *Amavasya* night, where in the midst of dark nights, with drums, torches, music and fireworks, vast congregations are to assemble and sacrifice 108 white living goats (not having the least black spot in its body)", were all Hindu rituals in which Muslims could not be and were not expected to participate. The Muza-farpur bomb was thrown on a new moon day which made Kerr comment sarcastically : "It is perhaps more than a coincidence that this, the first revolutionary sacrifice to the goddess Kali, was performed on the auspicious night of the *Amavasya*."

The attitude of the revolutionaries towards Muslims is best explained in the organisational document of the Anushilan Samiti, *Paridarshak*. The concluding portion of the document is

taken up with a discussion why Muslims were not admitted to the samiti. The writer of the document said : "So far as can be foreseen, it is our firm belief that within a year or two the entire Mahomedan nation will become submissive to the Hindus. But if the Hindus then abandon their firmness and national glory, and sink so low as to court friendship with the Mahomedans by being hand in glove with them, the Mahomedans will be puffed up and no good but only evil will be brought about. That nation which cannot preserve its national glory, national greatness and dignity, and national firmness, steadfastness and pride, and on the contrary exhibits levity, baseness and waywardness can never be respected by other nations. But in no circumstances would it be proper to show hostile feelings towards, or to deal unjustly with the Musalmans as a nation." (Quoted by Kerr in *Political Trouble in India*)

What was true of the Anushilan Samiti was true of other revolutionary groups also. The members of all groups had to take their vows in the name of Hindu gods and goddesses which precluded participation by Muslims. A historian of the Anushilan Samiti has frankly admitted that the tradition of taking vows of revolutionary activities in the name of Hindu religion went on uninterrupted and was handed down to the Anushilan Samiti in its elaborate stages of initiation and pledges. The Muslims of Bengal did not feel attracted towards the secret societies and revolutionary activities primarily based on Hindu rites and rituals. (Sarat Kumar Chatterjee in *Freedom Struggle and Anushilan Samiti*) In Daly's Note all prominent revolutionaries of the period under review and even some who gained eminence later are mentioned, and there is not a single Muslim among them. Kerr has included in his *Political Trouble in India* a who's who of the revolutionary movement, "a list of prominent political agitators and of those who have taken a leading part in revolutionary work in India and abroad" ; this list contains some 500 names of whom about a dozen only are Muslims.

Attempts have been made to play down and even deny that the early revolutionaries derived their fervour from Hindu ortho-

doxy. It is argued that Tilak had adopted Shivaji as his hero not because Shivaji was a Hindu but because Shivaji was a hero in the eyes of the people of the south, "If he had belonged to northern India he would have adopted Akbar as his hero." Lala Laipat Rai belonged to northern India, but Punjab under his leadership turned to Ranjit Singh for inspiration. Bengal chose Pratapaditya and not Isha Khan.

One of the few Muslims who had joined the revolutionary movement in those days was Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, who has recorded that all the revolutionary groups were then anti-Muslim and their recruits were exclusively from the middle classes. Azad gave two reasons for this : first, the revolutionary groups saw that the British Government was using the Muslims against India's political struggle and the Muslims were playing the Government's game, and second, unable to trust Hindu officers any more, the Government imported a number of Muslim officers from the United Provinces for the Intelligence Branch of the Police with the result that "the Hindus of Bengal began to feel that Muslims as such were against political freedom and against the Hindu community." (*India Wins Freedom*) At first the revolutionaries did not fully trust Azad, but in course of time "they realised their mistake and I gained their confidence "

Azad was able to bring round to his point of view "some" of his revolutionary friends, not all. Though he found a group of young men among Muslims ready to take up "new political tasks," the Muslims remained by and large alienated from the nationalist upsurge. They were not so before the extremist take-over. The reason, according to Niharranjan Ray, was that the so-called "moderates" or liberals were, socially speaking, much more progressive in their social and economic thinking, much more knowledgeable and critical of British colonial exploitation, politically speaking, much more secular and generally, much more modern and scientific in their outlook. "It is an irony of history that the more aggressive and militant our nationalism proved to be, the more did it turn out to be Hindu in its religio-cultural content and spirit, at any rate from the

mid-1860s to the 1910s." (*From Cultural to Militant Nationalism in Freedom Struggle and Anushilan Samity*) Many of the leading revolutionaries, including V. D. Savarkar, B.S. Moonje, and B. C. Chatterjee, whose name repeatedly appears in Daly's Note, ended up formally in the Hindu Mahasabha, which was founded during the high tide of the revolutionary movement. There were many others whose religiosity did not find expression through institutional association.

The revolutionary movement never assumed a mass character. By its very nature, it could not. Ker estimated that a complete list of prominent political agitators during 1907-17 would "run over 2,000 names" for Bengal. Not all of them were revolutionary terrorists, and it is doubtful if their number ever exceeded 6,000. Even in this very limited circle, persons of high castes predominated. An analysis by the Sedition Committee of the caste composition of 186 persons convicted in Bengal of revolutionary crimes or killed in commission of such crimes during 1907-17 shows that there were no Muslims among them, though there were four Europeans and Eurasians guilty of arms traffic. Of the rest, 55 were Brahmins, 87 Kayasthas, and 13 Baidyas ; which means almost 90 per cent of them came from the three top castes. Mahishya and Kaibarta accounted for three each, Saha two, and Rajput, Tanti, Subarnabanik, Vaishya, Karmakar, Barui, Mudi, Sudra, and Uriya one each. The analysis does not speak well of the Committee's knowledge of castes in Bengal but that cannot take from the fact that the revolutionary movement was overwhelmingly dominated by Brahmins and Kayasthas, who occupy the two top rungs of the caste ladder in Bengal. The Kayasthas are more numerous in Bengal, but the number of Brahmins or Baidyas is perhaps less than that of Mahishyas or Kaibartas ; in any event, the disproportion between the participation of Brahmins and that of Mahishyas cannot be explained by the disparity between their numbers.

The Sedition Committee also analysed the age and profession/occupation of these 186 persons. The age analysis confirmed the obvious that the vast majority of the active revolutionaries were quite young, two-thirds of them belonging to the

19-25 age group. Only one of them was over 45 and two were below 15. Forty-eight belonged to 16-20 age group, 76 to 21-25, 29 to 26-30, 10 to 31-35 and nine to 36-45. The age of 11 persons were not recorded. The analysis of profession or occupation of these 186 persons reveals a preponderance of middle classes among the revolutionaries. Understandably, the largest number was of students ; there were 68 of them, all too young to embark upon any profession. Persons of no occupation came next, their number being 24 : 23 were engaged in trade and commerce, 20 were clerks and persons in Government service, 19 were landowners, 16 teachers, and seven doctors or compounders. Of the rest, five worked in newspapers or presses, one was a cultivator, and one was said to be an opium smuggler. Occupations of two were not recorded. The profile of a Bengali revolutionary that emerges out of these analyses is that he was a Hindu male, just out of his teens, a Kayastha or a Brahmin, and a student or had no occupation at all.

Naturally, schools and colleges were the most fruitful recruiting centres. The Sedition Committee report makes special mention of a pamphlet seized from the house of Amulya Sarkar in Pabna in September 1916. The pamphlet was not the official document of any particular organisation ; it dealt with the organisation of an "Indian Liberating League," which believed that the greedy and selfish foreigners could not be expelled from the country "without the subversion of the established Government by means of arms and amunitions required for a national rising." What is of considerable interest in this rambling document is the order of preferences to be followed while selecting recruits. Two kinds of grouping of recruits were suggested : (1) according to their place in life, (2) according to their activity and utility. In the first group, the first class recruit would be boys before they reached maturity, youths before their marriage would be second class, married young men third class and aged and worldly men fourth class. In the second category, "boys who are prosecuting their studies" should be deemed as first class recruits, young men who will venture anything, even at the risk of their lives would be second class

recruits, those who would help with money only would belong to the third class, and those who have genuine sympathy only would be regarded as fourth class.

It will be seen that in both these groups the greatest emphasis is laid on recruitment of students, in practice, school students. "Abundant evidence" forced the Sedition Committee to the conclusion that "the secondary English schools, and in a less degree the colleges, of Bengal had been regarded by the revolutionaries as their most fruitful recruiting centres." This is another reason why the revolutionary movement remained virtually confined to the English educated Hindu middle class whose wards went to school; it did not reach down to the poorer classes; nor did it spread out to other communities, like the Muslims, who took to English education later. The Muslim middle class was of a much later growth than the Hindu middle class.

The revolutionary movement in Bengal and elsewhere in the country was the by-product of a sub-nationalism whose consequences have been far-reaching. The British took full advantage of the alienation of the Muslims, who were economically and, therefore, educationally backward to drive a permanent wedge between the two communities. The Muslims were made to believe that their progress lay not merely in cooperating with the British but in opposing the Hindus. The carrot was openly dangled before the Muslims; Bampfylde Fuller, the first Lt-Governor of Eastern Bengal unashamedly declared that the Muslims were the favourite wife of the Raj (Suo Rani). Though partition was annulled in 1911 in favour of a subtler and surer way of reducing the political and administrative eminence of Bengal and Bengalis by shifting the capital from Calcutta to New Delhi, the rift persisted till it matured in permanent division of Bengal into parts of two sovereign countries. The West Bengal-Bangladesh boundary follows almost exactly the Curzon line. Imperialism fulfils itself in many ways, and the last laugh was certainly Curzon's and Risley's and not of those who claimed to have unsettled a settled fact. On no account however should this denouncement incline us to under-

value the suffering and sacrifice that the revolutionaries willingly undertook or to overlook that, in the words of Cleveland, "the deluded boys who believed they could bring in India's millennium by murdering a few white men were quite prepared to give their lives for their country."

II

Daly's Note on the growth of the Revolutionary Movement in Bengal is one of those confidential papers that the Criminal Intelligence Departments of the provinces where revolutionaries were active used to prepare from time to time for internal consumption. This Note was drawn up when Daly was a Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Special Department, that is, head of the Intelligence Branch. He rose to be the Inspector-General of Police, Bengal. In his Foreword to Ker's *Political Trouble in India*, Mahadevprasad Saha has named seven confidential publications of the Intelligence Branch on revolutionary activities and organisations in eastern India. Daly's Note comes first in the list. The other six are : *An Account of the Revolutionary Organization in Eastern Bengal with special reference to the Dacca Anushilan Samity*, Parts I and II, Vol. 1 by J. E. Armstrong ; *Notes on Outrages Compiled in 1917* by J. C. Nixon ; *An Account of the Revolutionary Organization in Eastern Bengal with special reference to the Dacca Anushilan Samity*, Part III, Vol. II by J. C. Nixon ; *History of the Political Agitation and Bhadralog Crime in the city of Dacca from 1905-1913* by L. N. Bird ; *Connections with the Revolutionary Organizations in Bihar and Orissa, 1906-1910* by W. Sealy, and *A Memorandum on the National Volunteer Movement, 1907* by J. Stevenson. Kerr's book does not go beyond 1917, naturally Intelligence publications of subsequent period do not figure in this list. It is evident from the list that Daly's Note is the only comprehensive Intelligence account of the first phase of revolutionary terrorism in Bengal, of the activities of the first rebels. For nearly seven decades it has served as source material.

Daly maintains that the attempt to wreck the special train of Sir Andrew Fraser, Lt-Governor of Bengal, at Naraingarh in Midnapur district in 1907 was the first proof that the revolutionary party had swung into action. The significance of the year has not been brought out by him. It was the 50th anniversary of the Sepoy Mutiny, later called the First War of Independence. Although the revolutionary movement was far from being restorative in character like the Mutiny, which sought to restore the Mughal empire, there was a widespread belief, shared by many revolutionaries, that India will win independence in that anniversary year. Later the year was shifted to 1917. Many will recall the speculative belief current in the forties that India will secure her freedom in 1957, the centenary year of the Sepoy Mutiny and bi-centenary year of the Battle of Plassey. When independence came to a divided India in 1947, the 90th year of the Mutiny, it began to be said that India would reunite in 1957.

For the purpose of his Note Daly has treated the various revolutionary groups, the differences among whom were in certain instances quite intense, as constituting a single party although at no stage could the revolutionaries function unitedly. Jatin Banerji, whom Daly says Aurobindo sent from Baroda to organise a revolutionary party in Bengal, and Barin fell out with P. Mitra, which was the beginning of the great division in the revolutionary movement in Bengal into 'ugantar and Anushilan groups. Before long, Jatin and Barin quarrelled and Aurobindo had to intervene. But the two never got on together. Acquitted in the Manicktala conspiracy case, Jatin took to "Sannyas" and became known as Niralamba Swami. On a trip to Dacca, P. Mitra and Bepin Pal laid the foundation of the Anushilan Samiti there, and it was they who placed the new unit in charge of Pulin Das. The militancy imported in the organisation by Pulin was not to the liking of P. Mitra, and soon the Anushilan Samiti of Dacca began to function independently. Besides, there were other organisations like Swadesh Bandhab Samiti of Barisal, Brati Samiti of Faridpur, and Suhrid Samiti and Sadhana Samiti of Mymensingh, all of which were banned in 1909. Sumit Sarkar quotes a report drawn up by the Inspec-

tor-General of Police, Bengal, in January 1906 which listed 14 clubs and societies in Calcutta "concerned in the present swadeshi movement"; an intelligence branch report a year later raised the number to 19 (*The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal*). There was further proliferation of organizations and splits within splits as the revolutionary movement spread.

In spite of all this, a slender thread of unity ran through all of them. To bring this out Daly appended a chart to his Note under the title Ramification of Terrorism in Bengal. It shows how Aurobindo acted as the link between the two parallel revolutionary movements of Maharashtra (represented by Chapekar Club, Nana Fadnavis Movement, Shivaji Revival Movement, Vahiritwa Sabha, and Thakur Saheb) and Bengal (represented by Anushilan Samiti, Calcutta, of P. Mitra, Sarala Devi, and Count Okakura. The new united organisation in Calcutta branched out in three directions; one remained in Calcutta, another went to the districts of Bengal, which included parts of Bihar and Orissa then, and the third went to Eastern Bengal and Assam.)

Even after the period covered by Daly's Note, this tenuous unity between the revolutionary groups, by then more numerous, remained. One proof of this was the distribution of the stolen Mauser pistols to the various revolutionary groups despite all their rivalries and differences. The theft of the 50 Mauser pistols from Rodda & Co , a firm of gunmakers in Calcutta, in August 1914 has been described by the Sedition Committee in its report as "an event of the greatest importance in the development of revolutionary crime in Bengal." The theft was planned by Atmonnati Samiti of Calcutta of which Bepin Ganguli was then the most prominent leader. The Atmonnati was then one of the affiliated units of revamped Jugantar under the leadership of Jatin Mukherjee. The Sedition Committee says the authorities have reliable information to show that 44 of these pistols were almost at once distributed to nine different revolutionary groups in Bengal, and it is certain that the pistols so distributed were used in 54 cases of dacoity or murder or attempts at dacoity and murder subsequent to August.

1914. It may indeed safely be said that few, if any, revolutionary outrages have taken place in Bengal since August 1914, in which Mauser pistols stolen from Rodda & Co. have not been used." Thirtyone of the stolen pistols had been recovered in different parts of Bengal when the Sedition Committee reported.

The most significant revolutionary event of the period reported on by Daly is the Manicktala conspiracy, and Daly makes no secret of his disappointment at the court verdict in the case. "The whole result of the Manicktala bomb case is rather puzzling as a guide to what will and what will not secure a conviction in Indian Court of Law," Commenting on Indra Nath Nandi's acquittal on appeal, Daly says that his escape from conviction may be regarded as one of the luckiest that ever favoured an obviously guilty person. It is not without purpose that Daly took care to mention earlier that "by a singular coincidence Aurobindo had passed the I. C. S. examination in the same year, and had been at Cambridge with Mr. C.P. Beachcroft, who was afterwards to sit in judgment on him in the Manicktala bomb case." He has also recorded disapprovingly the High Court's refusal to regard Birendra Dutt Gupta's "confession" in the Shamsul Alam murder case as admissible, as a result of which, he said, Jatin Mukherjee "walked triumphantly out of the dock." Clearly, even in those days the executive regarded the normal judicial process as an impediment to efficient administration.

Daly has, however, quoted the "famous sweets letter" wrongly which, he maintained, was strong proof that at Surat at the time of the Congress extremists from other parts of India agreed with the Bengali extremists on a policy of "physical force." The letter was also proof of Aurobindo's involvement in Manicktala conspiracy. The Sweets letter as quoted in Ker's *Political Trouble in India* is as follows :

BENGAL CAMP, NEAR AJITS,
27th December, 1907.

DEAR BROTHER,

Now is the time. Please try and make them meet for our conference. We must have *sweets* all over India ready made for imergencies (*sic*). I wait for your answer.

Your affectionate,
BARINDRA K. GHOSE

The text of the letter, including the wrong spelling is quite important. for on an examination of the text Beachcroft chose to dismiss the letter as a plant. Contending that the letter could not have been written to Aurobindo by Barin, Beachcroft said :

"I don't take account of the argument that if both were at the same place one would probably not write to the other, or the other would not have preserved the letter. Barin is the youngest of five brothers. Arabindo is the third. The assessors say that in such a case Barin could not have intended Arabindo by 'Dear Brother'—the expression could only mean the eldest brother. If it meant Arabindo it would have been 'Dear Sejda.' That is a point on which I cannot question their opinions. But speaking for myself. I cannot understand Barin signing his name in full if writing to Arabindo. In letters between Arabindo and other relations Barin is spoken of as Bari. The brothers were on friendly terms, they must have been if the prosecution theory is to be accepted that the visits to No. 23 were to Arabindo, and it is highly improbable that Barin would sign in this way writing to Arabindo. He might write to someone else and use the phrase 'Dear Brother' corresponding to the use of 'bhai' in the vernacular. In such a case if it was intended to reach Arabindo the question suggests itself, if both brothers were at Surat why did not Barin write to Arabindo direct. That the word 'emergencies' is spelt 'imergencies' is nothing, for in ex. 657 Barin spells 'philosophy' 'phylosophy.' Though then I find that the document was in fact in Arabindo's house on 2nd

May, it is of so suspicious a character that I hesitate to accept it. Experience tells us that in cases where spies are employed documents do find their way into the houses of suspected persons in a manner which cannot be explained by the accused."

Daly is in company, though Ker also disagreed with Beachcroft's conclusion. Ker said : "If both the brothers had had only a Bengali education the opinion of the assessors would have deserved the greatest respect, but when it is remembered that Arabindo was much more at home in English than in Bengali and that Barin was himself no mean English scholar the improbability of the whole thing is considerably diminished." Ker held that Arabindo was a very important member of the Manicktala conspiracy.

Four months after Daly had submitted his Note the annulment of partition was announced. The end of the anti-partition agitation and the prosecution of Barin and other leaders of the Manicktala conspiracy brought a temporary lull in the revolutionary movement in Bengal. As Ker put it, "the success of the Manicktala conspiracy case broke up the Calcutta branch of the revolutionary movement for the time, and the centre of interest was shifted to Dacca where the Anushilan Samiti was becoming active and dangerous." In his rather rambling and repetitious Note in which Daly has dispensed with chronological narration and gone back and forth in time, he has dealt at some length with the Dacca Anushilan Samiti in the first few years of its existence. The arrest and deportation of Pulin Das and Bhupesh Nag under Regulation III of 1818 in December 1908 and the banning of the Dacca Anushilan and some other Samitis in January 1909 "led to a crisis in the organisation." The sources of money supply dried up : the future of members and whole-timers became uncertain, and "a mood of temporary despair and frustration" prevailed in the ranks. The leadership of the underground Samiti was taken over by Ashutosh Das Gupta, but he was arrested within a year. Makhan Lal Sen became the new leader of the Samiti.

The name of Jatin Mukherjee appears towards the end of Daly's Note. Daly deplors Jatin's release in the Howrah Cons-

piracy Case. At the time of drawing up the Note Daly surely could not imagine that this one-time stenographer of the Bengal Government would soon assume leadership of the revolutionary movement, bring together the different revolutionary samitis and organisations in western Bengal under the umbrella of Jugantar and become a legend before he died in a frontal battle with the police. Daly's report ends in the twilight period when the pioneers of the revolutionary movement in Calcutta and Dacca had been arrested and detained with or without trial and their successors were still working their way up to the top or having made it were not firmly in the saddle. The first rebels had then been put out of the way, and the second batch was yet to take over

The tactics of this second batch, if not generation, of leaders were also different. They began to look outward to realise their dream. Aurobindo and Barindra came from abroad to liberate the country by invoking and organising youth power and without any help from abroad. P. Mitter was a barrister. The next batch of leaders were entirely home-grown, but they learnt to look beyond the country's borders. They sought to take advantage of the first great war and tried to enlist the support of Britain's enemies for the struggle of revolutionaries in India. They negotiated with the Germans and waited in vain for arms that did not arrive. A young revolutionary whom they had sent abroad as their emissary to negotiate an arms deal became later famous as M. N. Roy. All this formed part of a new chapter. Daly closes his Note with the collapse of the first pioneering attempt.

Daly's Note is brief but the appendices are quite exhaustive. The statement of Lolit Mohan Chakravarti, which constitutes the bulk of the appendices, is of considerable interest not only because it helped the police considerably to start the Howrah conspiracy case but also because it describes in detail the inner working of a revolutionary group. It contains details not published before. Lalit's statement did not, however, impress the special tribunal presided over by the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court. Of 46 persons originally sent up one died, one

became insane, and five were acquitted or discharged in the course of the hearing. Of the remaining 39 the Court acquitted 33, convicting only six men among whom were Lalit and another person, Jatin Hazra, who also had "exposed the working" of the gang. In the lower court these two had been sentenced to six years' imprisonment and the other four to seven. The Chief Justice sentenced all six of them to eight years' rigorous imprisonment. Among those acquitted in this case were Jatin Mukherjee, Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya (M. N. Roy), and Nani Gopal Sengupta. One of the charges against the accused in this conspiracy case was tampering with the loyalty of soldiers. One of the accused had established contact with the 10th Jat Regiment stationed at Fort William then. After some time some men of the Regiment were court-martialled.

The court decisions almost simultaneously on the Howrah and Khulna conspiracy cases, both delivered by Chief Justice Jenkins, were, according to Ker, a heavy blow to the police. In the Khulna case the police saw men, admittedly guilty against whom evidence had been collected with the greatest difficulty, released with no more serious punishment than "a lecture from the Chief Justice." In the Howrah conspiracy case the sentences passed appeared to indicate that "to make disclosure to the police was regarded by the High Court as an aggravation of the offence." Daly agreed with Ker, and as he has recorded in his Note he had not the slightest doubt that Lalit's statement was in the main true.

III

Daly's Note is available in government archives and has been mentioned in a few books. But this book is not based on any official copy ; it is not being published by anybody's grace. The dog-eared copy from which this book is printed was smuggled out of Lord Sinha Road more than four decades ago. It was a daring act indeed in those days, and the person who did it goes unnamed. The Note ultimately reached Mr. Bhabendra

Mohan Majumder, who resigned from police service in February 1947 for “personal reasons.” Majumder says : “Under certain unusual and unbelievable circumstances the printed official report came into my possession. For long 40 years I have been preserving this precious document, waiting for a chance to get it published.” Publication of the document brings to the public a “strictly confidential” Intelligence report to which access is still very difficult.

I am grateful to Bhabendra Mohon Majumder for making the Note available to me and to Mr. Santosh Bagchi, Mr. Nikhil Sarkar, Professor Nisith Roy, and Mr. Bhola Chatterjee for the assistance they gave me.

Sankar Ghosh

NOTE ON THE GROWTH OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN BENGAL

THE existence of secret societies for the purpose of assassination and revolutionary crime first became an accepted fact in Bengal at the end of the year 1907, when the attempt to wreck the special train of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, Sri Andrew Fraser,¹ at Naraingarh in the Midnapore district on the 7th December 1907, proved the truth of the secret information which the Bengal S. B. had been getting from time to time since 1905 of the growth among the political agitators of a party determined on substituting physical force for constitutional agitation. The Naraingarh outrage was the first proof² that such a party had come into existence and had commenced its work.

Violent political agitation of an open and practically unrestricted character had been rampant in Bengal from the time of the passing of the partition measure in July 1905.³ For years previous to that, the audacity of the Bengali agitator had been increasing year by year. A study of the columns of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* for the ten years preceding the partition, will show that the true policy of that paper was systematic opposition to all measures of Government, in a spirit of malignant hostility, rather than of honest public-spirited criticism. It lost no opportunity of attacking an European official, and of representing Europeans generally as tyrannical bullies, whose favourite diversion was kicking defenceless Indians. When in charge of the S. B. in 1901, I found that this paper habitually published stories of misdeeds of Europeans without the slightest effort to test their veracity, and such stories, when tested were often found to be monstrous exaggerations of trifling incidents, or at times even downright lies for which no foundation could be traced. As an instance, a story was published that a Railway employee at Khagele had fired a gun at a little Marwari girl, wounding her severely in the leg. Enquiry showed that a small

European boy who regularly played with the Indian children in the bazar, had thrown a common throw-down cracker behind a little girl. The girl being frightened had run into her father's shop crying. She had suffered no injury whatever and had returned to play two minutes later. It was the *Patrikâ*, I think, that first started the doctrine of retaliation, advising the children of the soil in dealing with Europeans, to return frown for frown and blow for blow.

On the 12th December 1903, the Government of India published proposals for the transfer of the Chittagong and Dacca Divisions to Assam.⁴ The Bengali agitators had apparently been in expectation of some such announcement, for early in the year spasmodic articles had appeared in some of the newspapers referring to a scheme of the Government for partitioning Bengal, and in February 1903, a public meeting had been held in Chittagong under the Presidency of Babu Jatra Mohan Sen,⁵ the leading Pleader and Secretary of the Chittagong Association, protesting against the transfer of the Chittagong Division to Assam. The announcement which appeared in the *Gazette of India* in December 1903, was not at first greeted with any unanimously hostile criticism by the Press or by the agitators in general. The clue for the commencement of combined hostility to the measure seems to have been given by a meeting of the Bengal Landholders' Association, held in Calcutta on the 17th December 1907, at which it was decided to appoint a Committee to carry on a sustained and systematic agitation against the proposed partition of Bengal.⁶ Maharaja Surja Kanta Acharjya, of Mymensingh,⁷ took a leading part at this meeting, and simultaneously a protest meeting occurred at Mymensingh, which was the opening of the anti-partition agitation in the mufassil. At the meeting of the 17th December in Calcutta, the landlords of both Bengals, who were present, appear to have been unanimous in the condemnation of the proposed partition measure, and among them was the Nawab of Dacca,⁸ whose subsequent conversion to the partition proposal was the subject of most bitterly hostile comment from the Hindu zamindars. The Indian Association of Calcutta,⁹ which had

for its Secretary, Babu Surendra Nath Banerji,¹⁰ and had among its members the influential popular leaders who were not entitled to belong to the Landholders' Association, promptly joined the latter in working up the agitation. In January 1904, protest meetings were reported from towns and villages in nearly every mufassil district in Bengal. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and even leading English-owned Calcutta papers, notably the *Englishman*, also showed hostility to the proposed measure. Two leading members of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr Cable, afterwards Sir Ernest Cable, and Mr Ellworthy, were said to have given a promise to Babu Sita Nath Roy, of Bhagyakul,¹¹ to assist the Bengalis in opposing the partition proposals. It will be seen from this that the agitation against the partition of Bengal was not one which was confined to professional agitators, but the professional agitators who had for many years made it their business to oppose every prominent measure of Government, found for the first time the solid support in agitation of men of wealth and influence, which enabled them to organise and carry on a wide-spread campaign against the Government, such as, for want of support and resources, they had never been able to organise before.

A history of the partition agitation up to the end of the year 1905, was submitted to Government by the S.B. in January, 1906, and contained a comprehensive narrative of the growth of the agitation up to that time. I shall not attempt here to recapitulate in detail all the incidents of that agitation, as my present object is to provide a note on the more serious aspect of affairs since agitation developed into violence and anarchy. After the departure of the Viceroy for Simla in 1904, the anti-partition agitation subsided under a belief that Government had dropped the scheme in deference to public opposition, but early in 1905, rumours spread of a new and more sweeping scheme of partition. On the 10th January 1905, advantage was taken of the presence in Calcutta of Sir Henry Cotton¹², to hold a meeting in the Town Hall, at which a resolution was passed declaring that the Conference had learned

with a sense of relief that no decision had been arrived at by Government on the question of the proposed partition of Bengal, and praying that if the scheme of partition had undergone any modification or expansion, as stated in some of the leading Anglo-Indian newspapers, the revised scheme should be laid before the public for discussion before the Government of India arrived at a final decision on the subject.¹³

After this Conference at the Town Hall, little was heard of the subject until the 8th July 1905, when the Government of India published the scheme which was eventually carried out, and announced that it had already received the sanction of the Secretary of State.¹⁴ This announcement was the signal for an immediate outbreak of hostility in the Press and on the platform. The *Bengalee*¹⁵ described the measure as a grave national disaster and declared that the people of India were intensely loyal, but that a measure like the partition of Bengal was calculated to put a severe strain on their sentiment.

The Hon'ble Babu Bhupendra Nath Bose,¹⁶ at a meeting of the Bengal Legislative Council, declared the partition to be a calamity unparalleled in the days of the Mogal or Pathan. The Hon'ble Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar,¹⁷ at the same meeting, referring to the approaching visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, declared that their Highnesses would come and go, but the bleeding hearts of their future subjects would send forth the doleful strains of a mourning nation and mar the harmony of a great rejoicing.

Mr J. Chaudhri,¹⁸ Barrister-at-Law, who represented the Rajshahi Division, said they would part from the Bengal Government and its legislature, and, what was more, from their brethren, but a sense of national wrong would only serve to embitter their feeling against the Government which had brought it about. The agitation was at once taken up by the Bengali newspapers, both English and vernacular. At first the predominant note was one of lamentation rather than of anger. There was at first no open talk of any retaliatory action. The leaders professed to still have hopes in an appeal to the British Parliament.

On the 12th August, however, the *Bengalee*, in the course of a bitter article against Lord Curzon, declared that there was no longer any hope of the development of the Bengali race by sympathy and that it must be a case of development by antagonism or political Nirvana. According to the report received from the Superintendents of Police in the mufassil, the actual announcement of the partition did not at first appear to create any strong feeling even in many of the districts, which have since been most prominent in the turbulence which has followed. It would seem from information since obtained, that the leading spirits in these districts at once gave up hope of obtaining any reversal of the partition orders by means of agitation through newspapers and public meetings, and they were awaiting advice as to how they should act.

But suggestions of retaliation were not long in coming, Mr Lal Mohan Ghose, Barrister-at-Law,¹⁹ in speaking at a meeting held at Dinajpur on the 21st July, urged all Honorary Magistrates, Members of District Boards, Municipal Commissioners, and Panchayats, to resign their appointments *en masse*. On the 26th July, a meeting was held at Backerganj, at which it was decided to send emissaries into the interior of the district to explain the situation and to collect money to defray the cost of a memorial to the King-Emperor and the British Parliament. At this meeting a song was sung by a student, which began with the words "Why are you all asleep and in torpor? Wake up Bengali heroes with sword in hand." The paper on which the song was written was taken from the author and torn up by Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt,²⁰ who later on achieved great notoriety and was eventually deported in December 1908. Songs of this character subsequently became regular features of all political meetings, and the efforts of the Barisal poet sank into insignificance in comparison with the violent spirit of many that followed. But this song was the first open call for violence that came to notice.

Towards the end of July, the violent seditious leaflets to which we have since become accustomed, first began to appear. The first example of this was a leaflet in Bengali, headed "*Raja*

ke" (Who is our King ?). The violent vituperation against the English contained in this leaflet and the call for violence and bloodshed, was the public commencement of the propaganda of murder and outrage.

Another leaflet, headed "*Sonar Bangla*" (Golden Bangal),²¹ equally mischievous and violent, followed. These leaflets were sent out in ordinary wrappers, addressed to students, and to pleaders of Bar Libraries, and were widely circulated among immature youths and the half-educated people in the mufassil, who devoured their contents with avidity.

On the 17th July, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* had published a letter over the initial "G", in which the boycott of English-made goods was first advocated. "G" was at the time believed to be Mr Lal Mohan Ghose, but it is more probable, from what we know now, that it was written by either Arabindo Ghose or his brother, Barindra Kumar Ghosh. The doctrine of boycott at once caught on and was openly adopted at a meeting held in Calcutta on the 7th August 1905, which date subsequently came to be observed as an anniversary of the initiation of the movement.²² The doctrine was not new—it had been advocated early in the year 1905 by a Panjabi, named Tahal Ram Ganga Ram, who in February and March of that year, had distinguished himself by making inflammatory speeches in College Square.

A correspondent writing to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* on the 10th November 1905, pointed out that the crusade against the use of foreign goods had been first preached by a Bengali ascetic named Gurupada Swami, as far back as the year 1726. The principal articles of attack by the advocates of boycott, were foreign salt and sugar. They would quote from the *Encyclopædia Britanica* to show that the bones of pigs and cows were used for the purification of foreign salt and the blood of these animals in the manufacture of foreign sugar. It was sought to prove to both Hindus and Muhammadans that the use of these articles was a danger to their caste and religion. Manchester piece-goods were placed under a ban, the allegation of the use of tallow made from the fat of animals

in their manufacture being introduced to prove that they too could not be used by self-respecting Hindus or Muhammadans.

Efforts to start emporiums for the sale of country-manufactured goods had been made from time to time in Bengal for many years previously. The first actually on record having been made in the year 1891, at which time the movement had the patronage of such persons as Sir Romesh Chandra Mitter, then Judge of the High Court²³. Six years later in 1897, the poet politician, Rabindra Nath Tagore, had opened a *Swadeshi Bhandar*²⁴ at Harrison Road, but these genuine efforts to encourage national industries had never taken the form of open hostility towards the English Government, which they assumed subsequent to the boycott declaration of the 7th August 1905. The only *Swadeshi* establishment we know of previous to the commencement of the anti-partition agitation, which appears to have been connected in any way with a spirit of hostility to the English Government, was the *Lakhir Bhandar*,²⁵ of Cornwallis Street, which was started in 1903 by Miss Sarala Devi Ghosal²⁶, a B. A. of the Calcutta University and daughter of J. Ghosal, Secretary of the National Congress. Miss Ghosal has a brother in the Bombay Civil Service, who is married to the eldest daughter of the Maharaja of Cooch Behar. Miss Ghosal was probably the first person to open in Bengal a school of physical culture, with the direct political object of training up the young men of Bengal for deeds of physical prowess. She used to edit a monthly journal called the *Bharati*, and in 1904 she opened an academy at Ballygunge for the instruction of Bengali boys in fencing and Jiu-Jitsu, employing as a fencing master a person who called himself Professor Murtaza. This man is by descent partly European and partly Turkeman, and resided at Serampore. His grandfather, according to his own account, was General Popham, and though he now declares himself proud of the white blood in his veins, he was from 1905 to 1907, a popular and prominent figure in the rising party of violence. Prior to that time he had earned his living chiefly as a travelling acrobat and professional strong man.

He suddenly became a leader of the young men of Bengal and went from place to place instructing them in the art of fencing, sword play and wrestling. Books on his system were discovered among papers of the Dacca *Anusilan samiti*, and it was he who first taught the art of sword play to the notorious Pulin Das, of Dacca²⁷.

While the partition of Bengal was under contemplation by the India Government between the end of 1903 and the middle of 1905, the minds of the young men of India had been strongly influenced by the success of the Japanese in their victorious war with Russia ; if one oriental power could thus overcome European domination, it seemed to the young men of Bengal that there was no particular reason why any other oriental nation should not be equally successful. Arabindo Ghosh had by this time made his appearance with the doctrine of "India a Nation." He was sufficiently far-seeing to understand that the only hope of success to the agitation of violence lay in spreading the doctrine of discontent throughout India, and uniting the people of all the different provinces in one feeling of hostility towards the foreign rulers. He also had the sagacity to see that the surest and safest ground to proceed on would be religion, and it was he, we believe, who first conceived the idea of training missionaries to be sent forth in *Sanyasi* garb to all the ends of India to preach the new religion, which was the worship of the motherland. He cleverly interpreted the *Bhagwat Gita* to fall in with his doctrine, and developed the minds of his young followers with the idea that any action is justifiable, if its objects be the attainment of some benefit to humanity ; that death is of no more consequence to a man than changing suit of clothes ; and that every man has within him the power of a god, if by meditation and self-abnegation he likes to develop it. Arabindo Ghosh had at the age of 18 in the year 1890 passed tenth in order of merit for the Indian Civil Service examination, but had been disqualified for admission to the service owing to his failure to pass the riding test. By a singular coincidence he had passed the examination in the same year, and had been at Cambridge

with Mr C. P. Beachcroft, who was afterwards to sit in judgment on him in the Manicktola bomb conspiracy case. When the agitation began to spread in Bengal, he held the post of Vice-Principal of the Gaekwar's College at Baroda. He had been 12 years in all in the service of the Gaekwar, and among other offices had for a short time held the post of Private Secretary to His Highness. It was at Baroda, we believe, that he first began to adopt the idea of national unity and national freedom, and to form visionary schemes for the liberation of India from the foreign yoke. While there he was initiated by an upcountry man known as the Thakur Sahib,²⁸ whose identity has not been fixed, into a secret society that had existed on the Bombay side since the days of the Mutiny. While Arabindo Ghosh was at Baroda, he was visited by his brother, Barindra Kumar Ghosh. These two are the sons of the late Dr. Krishnadhan Ghosh, who had four sons, one of whom is A. D. C. to the Maharaja of Cooch Behar, the other being a Professor in the Educational Department.²⁹

It will be of interest here to take a brief glance at the progress which the revolutionary idea had been making on the Bombay side, for the Mahrattas had begun to spread the doctrine over India long before it got a hold on the Bengalis.

In 1897, when Messrs Rand and Ayerst were murdered in Poona³⁰, the police succeeded in tracing the crime to a secret society known as the Chupekar Club³¹, which in its early stages had been in almost every way similar to the Samities³² which sprang up in Bengal during the partition agitation. Boycott of foreign goods, abstention from foreign games, union with the Muhammadans, were all doctrines of the Chupekar Club in its early days, though it soon progressed to the collection of arms and eventually to political murder.

The Chupekar Club in Poona seems to have been but one conspicuous feature of a great Mahratta movement, which included several separate organisations, among which the best known were the Nana Farnavis³³ movement, the Shivaji Revival movement³⁴ and the *Vahtritwa Sabha*. The revival of the Mahratta nation was the root idea of the movement,

and the promoters formed a centre at Benares, the sacred city to which learned and devout Hindus and pilgrims from all parts of India resort, being a most convenient place from which to disseminate ideas throughout British India, as well as to the Native States and particularly the Independent Kingdom of Nepal. The Maharashtra School was established in Benares in 1898 by one Madho Rao Karmakar, and in view of recent disclosures, it is worthy of note that the 10th Jats Regiment was stationed in Benares in 1898.

There was a fairly large colony of Deccani Brahmins that had been in Benares for generations prior to 1898, and Mr Bramley, District Superintendent of Police of Benares, whose report, dated the 26th February 1901, is my authority for what I am writing about the Maharashtra School in Benares, was unable to decide whether the institution sprang into existence on the initiative of the local Mahrattas or was first mooted by emigrants from the Bombay Presidency.

Benares, Mr Bramley points out, has for a long time been selected as a suitable place for the banishment of Hindu Chieftains who have been expelled from their States or deprived of their high offices.

Mr Bramley refers to many such persons resident in Benares as a possible explanation of the reason why the Mahrattas selected Benares in preference to Poona as a centre from which to disseminate their doctrines. Mr Bramley shows that the Mahrattas movement did not attract any special attention in Benares in 1898.

In 1899 the Annual Session of the Congress was held in Lucknow and was attended by Bal Gangadhar Tilak⁸⁵ and Krishna Abaji Gururji⁸⁶ (both well known agitators of the Bombay Presidency) and several young members of the newly established Mahratta Society of Benares. The Benares Mahratta leaders were introduced to Tilak at Lucknow, and Tilak, after a tour in Northern India and Burma, again visited Benares, and shortly after Gururji arrived in Benares with some ex-members of the Chupekar Club and started work as proprietor and printer of a paper "*Kali Das*".⁸⁷

In 1900, on the outbreak of plague in Benares the *Kali Das* published mischievous articles on inoculation etc. for which it was prosecuted. Abaji Guruji took the responsibility of the articles, though he was absent from Benares at the time. An appeal was published in the *Kesari* by Tilak for subscriptions for the defence. The local Deccanis were not in sympathy. Abaji was sent to prison on failure to find security and was released in December on a bail of Rs. 8,000, one of the principal sureties being Madho Rao Karmakar who, in the following January, when the appeal came on for hearing by the High Court, was away touring in Gwalior, the Punjab and Baroda.

Mr Bramley, in summing up, says that the Maharashtra agitations in Benares were confined exclusively to a small clique of Maharashtra Brahmins who were thoroughly disaffected and disloyal, and that these young persons had in their mind the subversion of British power and authority in India and the revival of their own Maharashtra nation. Madho Rao, who opened the Maharashtra school, was a son of Hari Pant, a Deccani Brahmin of the Panda district, who has gained notoriety in the mutiny.

Two years later the Mahratta movement had caught on to some extent in Bengal and the Sivaji movement began to attract notice.

In 1902, the *Reis and Raiyet* published a letter from an Indian resident in London, drawing attention to a Sivaji meeting in Calcutta, at which Babu Surendra Nath Banerji had pointed to the movement as evidence of the spirit of union among the various races in India. The writer asks if the goal of this new union is to be found in the ambition of Sivaji which was to shake off alien rule and establish a Hindu Kingdom.

The Sivaji movement certainly made great progress in popularity and in 1906 the Sivaji celebrations were widespread in India and are even reported from Japan.

There can be little doubt that while Bengali public men were still in the stage of moderatism, the Mahrattas had already conceived the wider idea of spreading disaffection throughout

India, with a view to the complete overthrow of the British power.

To return to Barindra Kumar Ghosh, in accordance with his own confession, he came back to Bengal from Baroda, with the idea of preaching the cause of independence as a political missionary and moved about from district to district to start gymnasia, where young men would be brought together to learn physical exercise and study politics. According to Barindra, he started his propaganda in Bengal between 1900 and 1903, and visited every district and subdivision in Bengal, preaching the cause of independence. He estimates that he was about two years engaged on this mission. If his story be true, and I see no reason to doubt it, for it was a story of failure and not put forward in any mood of vanity, it is a significant exposure of the lamentable inefficiency of the Police Intelligence Department in those days, that not a trace can be found in the Police Abstracts indicating that his mission, even in a single instance, came to the notice of the police. Barindra got tired of the mission and his lack of success, and went back to Baroda and studied again for a year.⁸⁸ When he returned once more to Bengal, he had made up his mind that purely political propaganda would not do for the country, and that people must be trained up spiritually to face dangers. His return to Bengal was simultaneous with the outbreak of the agitation in 1905. Doubtless he and his brother in Baroda had long been contemplating the work on which they subsequently embarked, and the sight of the angry spirit of the people which had been aroused by the partition measure, led them to think that the time was ripe for action such as they had long had in their minds.

The boycott resolution in 1905 had been followed by many acts of open violence of a comparatively mild nature. Wanton assaults on Europeans had been committed in the open streets in Calcutta and young men and boys formed themselves into picketting parties to interfere with the sale of foreign articles, destroying the goods of persons who persisted in importing and selling foreign goods. Manchester *dhotis* were dragged

from shops and burned. Bags of Liverpool salt on their way to the consignees were pulled out of boats and thrown into the water.³⁹ It became the fashion for boys to adopt an aggressive and almost violent attitude to Europeans they passed in the public street—in fact, I have been informed that when any boy, by the physical training of the *Samitis*, had acquired sufficient strength to be passed as fit to serve his country, part of his mission was to endeavour to provoke a quarrel with some European. The European-haters used to direct the boys to clear their throats and spit when passing an European in the streets, as a sign of contempt and in the hopes that it might provoke a blow, in which case support would have been at hand to join in a retaliatory attack on the European. These tactics were on the whole disappointingly unsuccessful.

In 1906, the Bengal agitators had been showing signs of a split in their ranks, the politicians of the old school, such as Surendra Nath Banerji, hesitating to go to the extremes to which such men as Bepin Chandra Pal⁴⁰ and Arabindo Ghosh were prepared to lead.

At the Congress which was held in Calcutta in December 1906, the extremist or nationalist party openly avowed their object of gaining complete autonomy for India. It was probably at this Congress that a definite line was drawn between the extremists and the moderates.⁴¹ The moderates profess to aim at nothing more than a measure of self-government within the Empire ; the extremists or nationalist party, of which Arabindo Ghose and Bepin Chandra Pal were the organizers in Bengal, aim at nothing short of complete freedom from British and all other foreign rule, and hold that for this object the adoption of any measures towards which the conscience of its advocates lead them, are morally justifiable. It was the following year that the Congress at Surat⁴² broke up in scenes of violence and disorder. A letter written by one S. Setther, a Judge in the Mysore State, to Arabindo Ghosh, on the 21st December 1907, was exhibited in the Alipore bomb case and is instructively interesting in regard to events that preceded this riotous Congress. A copy of this letter is attached to my

note and should be perused. It was at Surat, too, at the time of this Congress that extremists from other parts of India appear to have agreed with the Bengali extremists on a policy of physical force.⁴² We had strong proof of this in the famous "sweets" letter,⁴⁴ an exhibit in the Alipore bomb case. It was a letter written by Barindra Kumar Ghosh, while at Surat, to his brother Arabindo. It ran as follows :

"Dear Brother—Now is the time. Please try and make them meet for our Conference. We must have sweets all over India ready-made for emergencies. I wait here for your answer.

Your affectionate,
Sd. Barindra Kumar Ghosh"

The word "sweets" in this letter was used to signify bombs, which Barindra Ghosh's party had already commenced to manufacture in the Muraripukur garden in Calcutta.

I have already referred to the *Samitis* which came prominently to the notice of the police after the commencement of the agitation against the partition of Bengal. I have referred, too, to an Academy of physical training established by Miss Sarala Devi Ghosal about the year 1903. The first intimation that we have of its existence in our official records dates back to the year 1903.

From secret information given by one of the members of the party in the Muraripukur garden case, we have reason to believe that the first secret society in Bengal came into existence about the year 1900. The informant tells us that a secret meeting was held in Calcutta about the year 1900, at which P. Mitter, Barrister-at-Law,⁴⁵ Miss Sarala Devi Ghosal and a Japanese named Okakura,⁴⁶ were present. The Meeting resolved to start secret societies with the object of assassinating officials and supporters of Government. Societies were formed in many districts in Bengal, but the informant could not state

how many of these original societies were still in existence. He stated that one of the first to flourish was at Kusthia, in the Nadia district. This was organised by one Jatindra Nath Mukherjee,⁴⁷ a clerk in the Financial Department in the Bengal Secretariat, who was subsequently arrested on a charge of planning the murder of the late Khan Bahadur Shamsul Alam.⁴⁸

The informant mentioned above stated that practically coincident with the formation of the society by P. Mitter and Sarala Devi Ghosal in Calcutta, was the initiation of Arabindo Ghosh into a society which had a branch at Baroda, already referred to.

In the year 1900, Arabindo sent Jotindra Nath Banerji, who was then in the Baroda army, to Bengal, as a missionary.⁴⁹ Jotindra, on arriving in Bengal, joined P. Mitter's association and started an Athletic Club. After some time, however, there was a quarrel between Jotindra Banerji and P. Mitter, the result being the original party was broken up into two divisions; Arabindo's party, directed in Bengal by Jotindra Banerji and Barin Ghosh, and P. Mitter's party, which founded the *Anusilan Samiti*⁵⁰ and its many branches all over Bengal. Jotindra Banerji subsequently quarrelled with Barin Ghosh and according to our informant, dropped out of the movement, and became a purely religious *sadhu*. He was arrested in connection with the Muraripukur case, but was discharged by the committing Magistrate,⁵¹ in consequence of which he came under suspicion of being the person who had given the police the clue to the existence of the Muraripukur garden. This was not true, however. The name of this Jotindra Nath Banerji *alias* Niralamba Swami, will be found at No. 25 in the list of prominent political agitators, published in the Bengal S. B. Abstract. Ostensibly he is now a religious devotee, but it is deemed advisable to still keep an eye on his movements.

The *Anusilan Samiti* which may be regarded as the most influential and thoroughly mischievous of all the *Samitis*, was, as I have already said, founded by P. Mitter. It had a strong patron in Bipin Chandra Pal. The Dacca branch which was organised

by the *ex-deportee*, Pulin Das, under the guidance of P. Mitter and Bepin Chandra Pal, eventually became an extremely well-organised body, and the discipline and audacity of its members made it more formidable than even the head *Samiti* in Calcutta. The *Anusilan Samiti* in Calcutta, which was eventually broken up on proclamation under Act. XIV of 1908 in September 1909, was, in its outward appearance to the general public, a harmless, and one might say a highly commendable institution, which professed to train boys for nursing the sick, to collect funds for famine relief, and to start gymnasia for physical training. Secretly, it was a depot for the collection of fire-arms, for training boys to deeds of violence and desperation, for instructing them in shooting and sword play. So far as we have been able to follow the doings of the famine relief parties sent out by the *Samiti* to Orissa in 1907 and 1908, they appear to have given relief only to persons who supplied them in return with bamboo lathis, which were collected in large numbers and sent off from the Jajpur Railway station in Cuttack to the *Samiti*'s head quarters at No. 49, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. It is a feature of all these secret societies, and one which indicates an extremely clever brain at the back of the whole movement, that they invariably assumed an outward form that was bound to appeal to the sympathies of the general public and to bring into odium the police or any other authorities, who attempted to interfere with and suppress them. Boys trained for murder were sent out to nurse the sick, in order that the public and even those who knew them intimately might refuse to believe in their guilt when they were arrested by the police and charged with their crimes. The Manicktolla garden itself, with its vast quantity of arms and explosives, concealed in an iron tank in a remote part of the garden, was to all appearances an innocent religious association, where young men met together to be instructed in the religion of the *Bhagwat Gita*. In fact most of the early criminals of the anarchist movement did appear to have been acting under deep religious convictions skilfully developed in them by the ingenuity of Arabindo Ghosh and other men of learning and mental

ability. We have an instance of an eminently respected Pandit and Sanskrit scholar, Mokhoda Samadhya,⁵³ having personally joined in a dacoity (the Bighati dacoity, Hooghly district, October 1908). For though he was acquitted at the trial, there is no doubt of his having been there.

In 1907 and 1908 we can safely say that the doctrine of *Swaraj* or complete self-government had captivated the minds of fully 80 per cent of the educated Hindu population of Bengal. So little of the actual power of the British Government had been seen in recent years in Bengal that apparently the people had forgotten or completely disbelieved in its existence. A wild idea spread among, not only the youths of the country, but even most of the older men that they had only to combine and take up lathis, revolvers and bombs to drive the English out of India in a few years. The unwillingness of the Government to take any measures to suppress the audacity of the newspapers and public speakers undoubtedly emboldened the rank and file of the extremist party. In three years there were few newspapers (Bengali owned) published either in the vernacular or in English that did not lay themselves open in almost every issue to a prosecution under section 124 A or 153 A, had the Government been willing to prosecute. Conspicuously seditious among all these more or less seditious papers, were the *Sandhya*⁵⁴ and the *Jugantar*,⁵⁵ two papers published in Bengali. These two journals threw aside all pretence of respect for the law and openly advocated the policy of murder. They did not stop at advocating the assassination of European officials and so-called traitors among their own countrymen, which of course included any Police Officers who were willing to do their duty. They advocated the raising of funds for revolutionary purposes by dacoity or any other crime which might be profitable. It is believed that the idea of raising funds by dacoities originated with Babu Abinash Chakravarti,⁵⁶ a Munsiff of Eastern Bengal and Assam, since dismissed. It is certain that Babu Abinash Chakravarti was closely connected with the *Jugantar* party, and it was a question whether he should not be placed on his trial along with the Manicktolla conspiracy gang. Doubtless he

would have been, along with many others, charged in a supplementary case, had it not been for the daring assassination of the approver, Noren Gossain⁵⁶ in the Alipore Jail. This was perhaps the boldest piece of work that the revolutionary party has so far accomplished.

An informant who was himself deep in the revolutionary movement, names the following as leading financial supporters :

Subodh Chandra Mullick⁵⁷ and Nirode Chandra Mullick, wealthy Calcutta house-owners residing in Wellington Square.

Rajendra Nath Mukherji alias Misri Babu,⁵⁸ of Uttarpara in the Hooghly district.

Charu Ch. Dutta,⁵⁹ a Judge of the Bombay Civil Service, and son of Kalikadas Dutt, Dewan of the Cooch Behar State.

P. Mitter, Bar-at-Law, since deceased,

Manoranjan Guha, mine owner of Giridih in the Hazaribagh district.

All the above were said to be financial supporters of the Manicktolla garden party. Charu Ch. Dutt was described as one of the prime movers of the conspiracy and one of the chief advocates of assassination. It was said by the informant that in 1907 he took Prafulla Chaki⁶⁰ (the boy who shot himself at the Mokameh Railway station after the Muzaffarpur outrage) to Darjeeling to throw a bomb at the Lieutenant-Governor, but that they were unable to accomplish the deed for want of a suitable opportunity. Several other Barristers and a large number of pleaders of the High Court and in the mufassil were named as supporters and sympathisers. Notably among these was one B. C. Chatterji,⁶¹ Bar-at-Law, who has since married the daughter of Surendra Nath Banerjee.

In regard to the connection of Babu Surendra Nath Banerji, the leader of the Moderates, with the actual revolutionary party, we have never had any information directly implicating him in the plans of the conspirators, though two informers have stated that he knew of the conspiracy and the intention of the conspirators to try the effect of bombs, and that on one occasion two or three of the conspirators actually went to him and showed him a bomb and that he laughed and told

them to see what they could do with it ⁶² I am not, however, inclined to attach much credit to this story. Babu S. N. Banerji's influence, which, at the commencement of this agitation was enormous, particularly over the student community, lost considerably in popular favour by his apparent unwillingness to go to the bold extremes of Bepin Chandra Pal and Arabindo Ghosh. ⁶³

One part of the policy which began in 1905 was the embarrassment of Government and the obstruction to public work by the organisation of industrial strikes. These strikes were not confined to Government offices, and Messrs Burn & Co., of Howrah, were one of the first to suffer. The strike in the Bengal Secretariat Press in 1905 originated in a wild idea among the agitators that by preventing the publication of the *Calcutta Gazette*, in which the notification of the partition was to appear, they would in some way obstruct the carrying out of the partition scheme. Needless to say they failed to hinder the publication of the *Gazette*. A. K. Ghose, ⁶⁴ Barrister-at-law, also took a leading part in the East Indian Railway strike and B. C. Chatterji figured in the Kidderpore Docks strike. Prominent among the leaders in the strikes were A. C. Banerji, ⁶⁵ Barrister-at-Law and Premtosh Bose. ⁶⁶ It is believed that the latter, at any rate, made a very good thing financially out of his occupation as strike-leader ; so much so that he had to give up the occupation, as it became a dangerous one for him when the strikers began to enquire what had become of their money.

I have already referred to the many societies that came into existence in 1905 and 1906. Among these the Anti-Circular Society ⁶⁷ which was organised by a young student name Sachindra Prosad Bose, ⁶⁸ who was subsequently deported in 1908, took a leading part in the trouble at Barisal at the time of the Provincial Conference ⁶⁹ in 1906. The Anti-Circular Society was a society of students formed to protest against a circular of the Government disapproving of students and school-boys taking part in politics. The trouble in Barisal in 1906 was the result of a deliberate effort on the part of the agitators,

led by Babu S. N. Banerji, to defy executive authority. So far as one can gather, many of the young men went down there deliberately intending to provoke the police to use violence in order to stimulate an agitation, which at that time was again showing signs of languishing. They succeeded. One or two young men received blows from the police, out of which enormous capital was made in the Press and by public speakers, and it became the fashion to swear by the blood spilt at Barisal to serve one's country with one's life, if necessary.

In September 1905, the agitators inspired, we believe, by Babu Arabindo Ghosh, had decided that the anti-Government agitation must be spread with the assistance of the ministers of religion. Mr A. C. Banerji, Barrister-at-Law, already referred to, went out to Santipur in the Nadia district, where his home is, and sought the Pundits and Goswamis of the place, who are held in great esteem by Hindus throughout India. The stories of impurity in the manufacture of European salt and sugar hinted at in the early stages of the agitation, were now emphasized in order to rouse the religious scruples of both Hindus and Muhammadans.⁷⁰ The vernacular paper *Bangabasi*, on the 2nd September, published an article appealing to the Pundits of Bhatpara in the 24-Parganas, to follow the example already set by the Pundits of Nawadwip and join the movement for preaching against the use of foreign goods. The efforts to gain the support of the ministers of religion met with considerable success in the districts round about Calcutta. Brahmins refusing to assist in religious ceremonies, in which foreign articles were used or foreign cloths worn. The Bhatpara Pundits sent out missionaries to preach the *swadeshi* cause.⁷¹ During that year these men were found travelling and preaching in Behar and doubtless went much further afield, but were unnoticed. The *Patrika* stated that at a meeting held in Puri 100 intinerant *sadhus* had vowed to preach the *swadeshi* doctrine throughout India.⁷² Bengali youths began to don the saffron robes of *sadhus* and set out to preach *swadeshi* and anti-Governmet agitation, many of them getting as far as Nepal and the Punjab. According to the *Bengalee*, at a gathe-

ring at the Kalighat temple on the occasion of the *Mahalaya* on the 28th September, 50,000 people vowed in the presence of *Kali Mata* to abstain from purchasing foreign goods or employing foreigners to do anything that could be done by Indians. Both the Ramkrishna Mission⁷³ and the *Arya Samaj*⁷⁴ have been made considerable use of by the agitators for spreading their doctrines throughout India. The Ramkrishna Mission, with its head-quarters at the Belur *Math*, in the Hooghly district, has been a favourite gathering place for the young missionaries of the revolutionary movement. There is reason to believe that the heads of the Mission are now beginning to take a stand against the use that has been made of their name in furthering the spirit of unrest. Though revolutionists still resort to the Belur *Math*, the authorities are taking precautions to prevent persons who are under police suspicion from being actually admitted into the order. In regard to the *Arya Samaj* opinions differ as to its political intention and influence. In this connection I have discovered in the old records of the S. B. a letter written by one Alaram Sanyasi to the Bengal Government in 1895. It is headed "Disloyalty of members of the *Arya Samaj*."* Though Alaram Sanyasi was himself once anti-kine-killing agitator and an expelled *Arya Samajist* his letter is of interest, even though it had to be taken with caution. In this letter the writer states that Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Samaj had imbibed his ideas from the Mutiny leader, Nana Rao Peshwa, whom he had accompanied on his wanderings after the Mutiny, and that Dayanand's object was to stamp out British rule in India. The Gorakshini movement, he pointed out, was all a part of Dayanand's scheme. The *Arya Samaj* has of late been practically absolved of mischievous revolutionary connections, but there is no doubt that, like the Ramkrishna Mission, it has been freely used by revolutionists for spreading their doctrines. (A copy of this letter is attached to my note). I personally am inclined to regard the *Arya Samaj* as more political than

* See appendix

purely religious and a movement which requires careful watching.

As I stated in the beginning of this note, it was not until the end of the year 1907 that the Physical Force party commenced to demonstrate its existence by actual outrage. The Naraingarh case was the first to attract the attention of the authorities. About a month previous to that we have learnt from subsequent confessions, two attempts had been made with explosives to wreck the Lieutenant-Governor's special train, when it was passing through the Hooghly district. On the 6th December, the day preceding the Naraingarh outrage, a dacoity was committed at the Railway station at Chingripotta, in the 24-Parganas.⁷⁵ Certain persons, the sons of gentlemen, were suspected and some were sent up, but they were discharged by the Magistrate who disbelieved the story of the complainant. Subsequent confessions have shown that this was a political dacoity engineered by the *Anusilan Samiti*, of Calcutta, and carried out by young men of respectable parentage, some of whom were subsequently placed on trial in the Howrah gang case.⁷⁶

On the 23rd December 1907, Mr B. C. Allen, I. C. S., was shot with a revolver on the platform at the Goalando Railway station.⁷⁷ This act is believed to have been committed by some youths of the Dacca *Anusilan Samiti*, regarding whose doings Mr Allen had been making enquiries in Dacca. Eastern Bengal had experienced two or three outrages during 1907 and there had been serious rioting in the Mymensingh district between Hindus and Muhammadans, which had resulted in loss of life.⁷⁸ We have subsequently learnt that several youths from Calcutta went to Mymensingh to take part in these riots, notably Indra Nath Nandi,⁷⁹ subsequently tried and acquitted in the Alipore bomb case, though he had lost a hand through an accident in the handling of explosives. Indra Nath Nandi is the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Nandi, retired I. M. S. and through his father's exemption under the Arms Act, he had great facilities for getting possession of fire-arms. He was one of the founders, with Pabitra Dutt, of the *Chhatra Bhandar*,⁸⁰

which commenced as a Swadeshi shop and subsequently developed into the Banking and Accounts Department of the Manicktolla conspiracy. It was also a depot for the sale of fire-arms and ammunition, and Indra Nath used to procure revolvers from private sources and dispose of them at the *Chhatra Bhandar*.

Violent open agitation had been carried on in Calcutta all through 1907 and had culminated in riots at Beadon Square.⁸¹ Some apologists for the revolutionary party have tried to make out that the action of the Police in connection with the Beadon Square riots gave rise to the Physical Force party and made them determined to resort to acts of violence. This is, of course, absurd, as we have ample evidence, including the statements of innumerable members of the revolutionary party themselves, that the acts which commenced at the end of 1907 had been in contemplation and were being organised long before the Beadon Square riots. One Hem Chandra Das,⁸² of Midnapore, had been sent to France in 1906, nominally to study mechanics, but in reality to learn the art of making bombs. He had lived with a Russian anarchist woman during his stay in Paris, and through her had become acquainted with a number of foreign anarchists, from whom he acquired a certain amount of skill in the art of preparing explosives. It was he who prepared a book containing a bomb and sent it by one Paresh Moulik⁸³ (also convicted in the Alipore bomb case), disguised as a peon, to deliver to Mr Kingsford, who was then living at Garden Reach. The book was hollowed out and in the hollow was a cocoa tin containing about a pound of picric acid with three fulminate of mercury detonators. It was arranged so, that on the parcel being opened, a spring would be released and would strike on a nail inserted in one of the detonators, which would cause the bomb to explode. Fortunately, however, Mr Kingsford⁸⁴, taking the parcel to contain a book which he had lent to a friend, did not open it. It was packed among his other books and taken to Muzaffarpur, where it remained unopened until the beginning of 1909, when on information received from one of the under-trial

prisoners in the jail, a communication was made by the S. D. to Mr Kingsford, and the book bomb was discovered in his library.

According to Barin Ghosh he himself began to organise the Manicktolla Garden society at the beginning of 1907. To start with he collected 14 or 15 young men and educated them in religious books and politics. They had dreams of a far-off revolution, as he put it, and were collecting weapons in small quantities. Among the young men collected was one Ullaskar Dutt,⁸⁵ a Chemist, who had a small laboratory in his house. With his assistance the boys in the garden started preparing bombs. Outwardly the garden was an *asram* where young men associated for religious instruction. About the end of 1907, they were joined by Hem Chandra Das, already referred to. According to Barindra, they began to think of actually using explosives in consequence of numerous press prosecutions which were taking place. Their first attempt was at Mankundu in the Hooghly district at the time of the Kali Puja in 1907. This was a complete failure. The second was the Naraingarh case. It was in the beginning of 1908 that the Bengal C. I. D. first obtained information that led to enquiries regarding the garden at No. 32, Muraripukur Road, which was the property of Arabindo Ghosh, and his brother, Barindra Kumar Ghosh. Watch on the garden was organised by the C. I. D. and several members tracked from there to different houses and from one house to another. It was while this watch was actually going on that certain of the conspirators were followed out to Chandernagore. They were lost sight of there, however, and the following day the news of the attempt to murder the Mayor at Chandernagore by throwing a bomb through his window while he was at dinner, betrayed the object with which they had gone there.⁸⁶ This was on the 10th April. At the end of April, the C. I. D. received intimation that two members of the conspiracy had gone to Muzaffarpur, with a view to murdering Mr Kingsford. An officer of the C. I. D. was sent out to Muzaffarpur. A search in the town by the local police failed to reveal any suspicious Bengalis, and the

C. I. D. officer was on his way back to Calcutta, at the request of the local District Superintendent of Police, when the bomb outrage took place, in which Mrs and Miss Kennedy were killed by mistake for Mr Kingsford. The Bengal C. I. D. decided to wait no longer. They had been watching the Manicktolla garden for nearly two months. The existence of this garden was unknown to the Calcutta local police; other houses to which Barindra Ghosh, Hem Das and other habitués of the garden had been traced, were also kept under watch. A conference was held in the house of the Commissioner of Police on the night of the 1st May and the searches commenced on the morning of the 2nd.

Barindra Kumar Ghosh and a large number of young men were surprised in their sleep, and actually arrested in the Manicktolla garden, a search of which revealed the storage of a large quantity of explosives and materials for the manufacture of explosives, of bomb shells ready to be filled with explosives, and of revolvers, rifles, and ammunition. Barindra Kumar Ghosh, for his own reasons, actually assisted the police in the search and indicated the whereabouts of the store of arms. The following were the persons arrested in the garden, the correct address of which was No. 32, Muraripukur Road, Calcutta :

Barindra Kumar Ghosh	Nalini Kanta Sirkar Gupta
Ullaskar Dutt	Kunja Lal Shaha
Upendra Nath Banerji ⁸⁷	Sachindra Kumar Sen
Indu Bhusan Rai	Purna Chandra Sen
Bibhuti Bhusan Sirkar	Hemendra Nath Ghose
Poresh Chandra Moulik	Sishir Kumar Ghose
Bejoy Chandra Nag and others ⁸⁸	

The police also searched No. 48, Grey Street, the residence of Arabindo Ghosh and office of the *Navasakti*, a new paper which had been started under the guidance of Arabindo Ghosh (a split having taken place among those conducting the publication of the *Yugantar*) ; No. 38-4, Raja Nabo Kissen Street, the house occupied by Hem Chandra Das ; No. 15, Gopi Mohan Dutta's Lane, the house of Kanai Lal Dutt,⁸⁹ who afterwards

distinguished himself in the murder of Noren Gossain ; No. 134, Harrison Road, the residence of Nagendra Nath Gupta. In the last named house two bombs, dynamite, arms, ammunition, false beards, etc. were discovered. It was in the search of No. 48, Grey Street, that the police found the famous "sweet" letter.

The Deputy Inspector-General, Crime and Railways, Mr Plowden, had arranged for simultaneous searches in the houses of certain suspects in Midnapore. Khudiram Bose, the boy who actually threw the Muzaffarpur bomb, was a resident of Midnapore, and many others of the conspirators came from, or were closely connected with that district. Next to Calcutta, Midnapore was perhaps the most active centre of the movement, though up to the end of 1907, the police of that district had furnished the S. B. with very little information regarding the doings of political parties. In fact in 1906 the police reports received from Midnapore might have led one to believe that it was one of the most peaceful districts in the province, whereas we now know that in this province, there was no district outside Calcutta in which the schemes of the revolutionist party were making greater progress.*°

According to Barindra Kumar Ghosh, the young men found in the Manicktolla garden were there nominally to be instructed by him and Upendra Nath Banerji in religious and political books. Upendra Nath Banerji was a resident of Chandernagore. He had a brother named Gopendra Nath Banerji serving as a Sub-Inspector in the Bengal Police. Upendra was a man of some education and was regarded as an authority on religion, and has been correctly described as the High Priest of the Manicktolla garden. Most of the accused arrested in the garden made confessions some days after their arrest. The first of the arrested persons to make a confession was Barindra Kumar Ghosh himself. He related how he had come from Baroda and moved about the country as a political missionary, starting gymnasia and endeavouring to get the young men together to study physical exercises and politics. He described the failure of that mission and

how he had returned to Baroda and studied for another year, and then came back once more to Bengal determined to train young men up spiritually to face dangers. He related how with the aid of his friends, Abinash Bhattacharjee⁹¹ (also arrested), and Bhupendra Nath Dutt⁹² (then in jail, having been convicted for sedition in the publication of the *Jugantar*), he had collected some 14 or 15 men. He had commenced this work, he said, about the beginning of 1907. It was towards the end of 1907, just before I proceeded on leave, that Inspector Soshi Bhusan Dey, since deceased, who was then assisting me in political enquiries, reported having received information of a mysterious garden somewhere in the suburbs of Calcutta, where arms were being collected. Up to the time of my departure on leave, Inspector Soshi Bhusan Dey, had been unable to get any definite information or to fix the locality of the garden, but there can be little doubt, I think, that the story he had heard related to the institution that had been started by Barindra Kumar Ghosh.

The arms found in the Muraripukur garden were 11 revolvers, 4 rifles and 1 shot-gun. This, according to Barindra, was all he had collected. In his confession he proceeded to give an account of three attempts to murder the Lieutenant-Governor, and took upon himself the burden of the Naraingarh attempt, for which some common labourers of the locality, Nepal Dolai and others, had on their own confessions, already been convicted. It must not be believed that the police, who had sent Nepal Dolai and others for trial, had been under the impression that they were anything more than tools in the hands of some influential political party in Calcutta or elsewhere, for it was in pursuance of the investigation of the Naraingarh case that the clue to the existence of the Muraripukur garden was first obtained. Barindra's object in making a confession, was doubtless to lead the police into believing that the revolutionary plot did not extend outside the party which had been arrested. This device has been tried in other cases since. The anarchists have an idea that the police will be easily satisfied with a confession. It was, therefore,

formerly an accepted rule of the party that on any number of them being arrested under circumstances which left little hope of escape from conviction, some one should make a confession, in which he should not divulge any information against persons other than those who had been arrested, the idea being always to put a check on police activity, and to lead the authorities to believe that the party at work was a very small one. These confessions, made on arrest, have rarely contained one-half of what the persons making them really knew. The confessions made by the accused persons arrested in connection with the Muraripukur garden conspiracy have been printed with the paper book of the case, generally referred to as the Alipur bomb case. The confessions made by the young men generally testified to the mischievous influence of the *Jugantar* and other newspapers of the kind. A case for comparison of first confessions with what the persons confessing really knew, is that of Narendra Nath Gossain, a man of about 30 years of age. He was the son of a zaminder at Serampore. Noren Gossain confessed to having taken part in the attempt to murder the Mayor at Chandernagore. Confessional statements of this kind have always to be taken with a certain amount of caution, as one has to read behind them efforts to screen persons who have not already fallen into the hands of the police by the persons arrested accepting responsibility for all the outrages that have been committed. Noren Gossain's first statement should be compared with the full confession made by him at a later stage of the case, which will be found among the exhibits of the Alipur bomb case. (Exhibit No. 18).*

The arrest of the Manicktolla garden conspirators caused intense excitement among the extremists throughout India. The papers, and in particular the *Jugantar*, became more violent than ever, and when their publication was eventually put a stop to, they continued to appear in the form of secretly printed leaflets—openly and boldly inciting to murder and every conceivable form of violence.

* See Appendix.

Bombs were talked of everywhere. On the 15th May a sweeper driving a Municipal cart along Grey Street in Calcutta in the early morning, ran upon a bomb which exploded under his cart. The injuries caused to the sweeper were slight and the bomb was probably of inferior manufacture. On the 17th May, a bomb was found on the steps of St. Andrew's Church in Upper Circular Road. This article, which was an ordinary cocoanut shell bomb, was carefully labelled bomb and was apparently intended to be found, and to cause injury. It was about this time that one Indra Nath Nandi,⁹³ a youth who had been conspicuous among the junior political agitators and a founder with Pabitra Dutt of the *Chhatra Bhandar*, the *Swadeshi* emporium already referred to, blew off his hand while preparing a bomb in the house of his father, Lieutenant-Colonel Nandi, retired I. M. S. This young man was subsequently arrested and placed on his trial in the Manicktolla case. He was convicted by Mr Beachcroft⁹⁴ and sentenced to penal servitude for life, but fortunately was released on appeal. His escape from conviction may be regarded as one of the luckiest that ever favoured an obviously guilty person. The whole result of the Manicktolla bomb case is rather puzzling as a guide to what will and what will not secure a conviction in an Indian Court of Law. Seventeen out of 36 persons placed on trial, some of whom had been actually arrested in the garden, escaped conviction, in the Sessions Court.⁹⁵ The plea of the younger men found in the garden was that they were ignorant of the true nature of the place and had gone there for religious instruction.

I have already referred to a letter known as the "sweets" letter, which was considered one of the most damning pieces of evidence against Arabindo Ghosh. The defence argued ingeniously that this letter had been forged by the police, and strengthened their arguments by drawing attention to the fact that one of the C. I. D. informers, who had been used all along in the watching of the Manicktolla garden, a person named Sarat Chandra Das, was an old forger of currency notes and had originally come into the pay of the C. I. D.

as an informer in the investigation of note forgeries. Mr Beachcroft, while not going so far as to hold that the letter was really a forgery, regarded it with misgiving and it was practically on his disbelief in the genuineness of this letter that the case turned in Arabindo's favour, and he was acquitted. There may be reasonable grounds for doubt whether Arabindo Ghosh had actually encouraged his brother in that particular line of campaign, but it is hard to see how on the evidence laid before the Court the Judge could have believed that Arabindo had no guilty knowledge of what was going on and that it did not have his tacit approval, if not enthusiastic encouragement. Though Arabindo may be regarded as a man too clever and foreseeing to believe that success would attend a little effort of this kind of revolution, he possibly believed that an open demonstration of murder by bombs and an exhibition of the audacity to which Bengali youths had been brought by the new system of training, would have a stimulating effect on the spirits of others and would excite the minds of the young men throughout India and develop in them a spirit of reckless daring that would be of great use in the big venture which he possibly had in his mind's eye and for which he intended to wait a suitable opportunity, such as the embarrassment of England in a big foreign war. The full history of the Manicktolla bomb case can be best learnt by a study of the judgment and paper book of the case. The full confession of Naren Gossain will give an indication of the wide nature of the conspiracy, and how it had spread to many districts in both Bengals. There was not a Bengali-speaking district in the whole province, which was entirely free from it. Bankura, Midnapore, Hooghly, Howrah, Nadia, Khulna and Jessore may all be regarded as districts where the revolutionary movement had got a very firm hold.

Mr Denham prepared a chart* showing how the different branches of the Bengal conspiracy were connected one with another and how the whole were connected with Baroda and

* See Appendix

the Mahratta country. This chart was prepared as a guide to the Counsel conducting the Howrah gang case⁹⁷ and I am having it printed and attached to this note for the information of Police officers of the Province.

In June 1908, less than two months after the arrest of the Manicktolla conspirators, a new gang commenced operations on the Eastern Bengal State Railway. A series of outrages committed by this gang commenced on the 22nd June, when a bomb was thrown into a train which was pulled up at a siding at Kankinara, a European named Campsie receiving serious injuries, owing to which his arm had to be amputated. The bombs used in this and subsequent outrages of the kind were very inferior to those which had been prepared by the members of the Manicktolla conspiracy.⁹⁸

The Muzaffarpur bomb had been made of dynamite. Dynamite, too, had been used in the Naraingarh train-wrecking attempt, though traces of picric acid also had been found on the scene of that explosion.

The Chandernagore bomb which had been thrown into the Mayor's dining-room, had been a picric acid bomb, and the experiments in the garden at the time of the discovery had apparently been mainly in the manufacture of bombs of picric acid with fulminate of mercury detonators.

The bombs used on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, were all cocoanut shell bombs with a mixture of sulphide of arsenic and chlorate of potash, a preparation, which though highly dangerous, is commonly used in the manufacture of bazar fireworks. Bits of broken glass, nails, pins of jute combs, etc. were stuffed into the bombs, in order that they might cause greater injury on explosion. These outrages occurred from time to time up to April of the following year, when two detective officers of the Special Department succeeded in tracing them to a gang of Brahmins of Bhatpara, near Naihati, on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, led by a person named Norendra Nath Bhattachrji,⁹⁹ who at the time of the first occurrence in June 1908, had been posing as an informer of the local police. This Norendra Nath Bhattacharji is a man of violent and turbulent

character. He had always been rather a terror to the neighbourhood, and according to his own statement made to me subsequently on an assurance that it could not be used against him, he stated that the idea of the first outrage, in which Mr Campsie was injured, had occurred to him when two Brahmin women, distant relations of his, had been insulted by some drunken Europeans in the waiting room at the Railway Station. The Europeans who were employees of one of the jute mills of the locality, had trespassed into the females waiting-room and made improper suggestions to the Brahmin women whom they found there, and would probably have gone further had they not been interfered with by the station staff. This Narendra Nath Bhattacharji and other persons of Bhatpara, hearing of this occurrence, and with their minds full of the bomb idea which the members of the Manicktolla conspiracy had set going through Bengal, determined to prepare a bomb and throw it into a train in which some of the Europeans of the Jute mills were travelling back from Calcutta. They had no intention of injuring Mr Campsie personally. After this first successful outrage, according to Norendra, they were encouraged by reading the *Jugantar* to form a regular gang to commit bomb outrages, along the railway, with a view to killing or injuring European passengers. It was generally thought that many of these outrages were aimed at the life of Mr Hume, the Public Prosecutor, but according to Norendra and others of the gang who made statements on the subject, Mr Hume was never considered in the matter at all. They selected the line below Barrackpore for committing all their outrages, because there were more Europeans travelling over that line, and they selected a particular train in the evening as being one which always contained a number of Europeans travelling to Barrackpore from Calcutta. It was nothing to them whether Mr Hume travelled by this train or not.

The discovery of this gang was an instance of the possibility of the police being in possession of full information regarding the doings of a party of miscreants and being at the same time absolutely powerless to make out a case for putting them on

their trial. We had obtained from members of this gang two ready-made bombs which were found to be of precisely the same composition as those which had been used in the outrages and two members of the gang, unknown to each other, had made statements before the police in regard to their operations. The gang consisted of nine members, and had been working in parties of three, each party taking it in turn to commit an outrage. When one party of three was arranging its outrage, the other parties were forbidden to ask anything about their doings or any details as to how they set about their work. If they did not within a reasonable time commit an outrage, they were called on to explain what they were doing and were hustled on by the remainder of the gang. That these were the persons really guilty of these outrages there can be little doubt, for from the time the S. D. officers obtained the information and kept the members of the gang under close watch, the outrages ceased. Norendra Nath Bhattacharji was himself subsequently proceeded against by the local police, and convicted under section 110 F, ample evidence being forthcoming from his neighbours as to his turbulent and objectionable character in the neighbourhood.

At the same time, in 1908, political dacoities became of frequent occurrence. A most daring dacoity was committed at Barrah,¹⁰⁰ in Eastern Bengal and Assam, where the dacoits escaped by boat, keeping up a running fire on the villagers who were chasing them along the bank. In this dacoity certain persons were arrested and sent up, but the case broke down under trial. The dacoity is believed to have been really the work of Pulin Das, the head of the *Dacca Anusilan Samiti*.

Another dacoity took place at Bajitpur, in Eastern Bengal and Assam. This dacoity was the work of the party that was subsequently arrested in connection with the dacoity committed at Bighati,¹⁰¹ in the Hooghly district. On the 16th September, one Pannalal Chatterji, a young Brahmin of some education and of respectable parentage, turned approver in this case and confessed to having taken part in the Bighati and Bajitpur dacoities. It was in the Bighati

dacoity that Mokhoda Samadhya, a Sanskrit Professor of the National College, took part. The object of these dacoities was to raise funds for political purposes, and it is believed that the political purposes to which the proceeds were mostly devoted were the defence of persons under trial in political cases. The gang responsible for this Bighati dacoity consisted mainly of the followers of one Kartik Chandra Dutt,¹⁰² a youth who had distinguished himself in the year 1906 by leading the assault committed on some missionaries at the Santipur Railway Station in the Nadia district.

In 1909, Mr Denham¹⁰³ wrote a note on the *Sarathi Jubak Mandali Gang*, as it was called. This note gives a very good idea of the constitution of the gang from which persons were drawn to take part in the political dacoities. Mr Denham's note is now reprinted and circulated with this note for the information of District Superintendents. The *Jubak Mandali* was the name of a society in Calcutta which was perhaps second only in importance to the *Anusilan Samiti* for the number of persons included in its ranks who actually took part in crimes of violence. The *Sarathi* was a magazine which was conducted by members of this society, the editor being one Satyendra Nath Rai Choudhury, and the publisher, Ganendra Kumar Bose. It was a highly seditious magazine, but its existence was brief. The spiritual guides of the gang were one Tarakhpa alias Tarapada Banerji,¹⁰⁴ a mysterious *Sadhu*, who wandered about Bengal, being most frequently heard of in the districts of Birbhum, Nadia or in Calcutta. He was looked upon by the members of the gang as a man of great wisdom and spiritual power, and he was believed to be an adviser of the gang in their actual work as well as in spiritual matters. We had considerable difficulty in even finding out this person, and had had much more difficulty since we discovered him, in keeping his movements under watch. He is believed to be a disciple of an old *Sadhu* called Bamakhpa, of Tarapur, in the Birbhum district, whose death took place very recently. Bamakhpa was a person much venerated,

though, from the account given of him by an S. D. officer, who went out and visited his shrine at Tarapur, in Birbhum, he was a disgusting creature, who drank intoxicating liquors from morning till night, and was so fat that he could not move without the assistance of four men. He appears, however, to have been regarded by members of the revolutionary party as having possessed hypnotic power, for Noni Gopal Sen Gupta,¹⁰⁸ the leader of the Howrah gang, while in jail, wrote a letter to his father asking him, as a last resort, to go to Bamakhepa and ask him to use his powers to get him acquitted. Mr Denham, in his note, has mentioned one Monmatho Nath Mukherji *alias* Thakur, of Chandernagore, as a *Guru* of this gang, but from what we have learnt of Manmatho Nath Thakur, by watching him since, it is doubtful whether he is regarded as having any real spiritual influence. He appears to be more of a poet and a musician, a somewhat dissolute character, who passes a great deal of his time in the houses of bazar women.

Mr Denham has referred to one Jogin Thakur. At the time this note was written, there was a certain amount of uncertainty as to the exact identity of this Jogin Thakur. It is now definitely established that this person is one Jogendra Nath Tagore, an undesirable member of the Tagore family, who lives at Rani Lane, Cossipore, Calcutta. This person's influence with the revolutionary party is still considerable and he is believed to be one of the connecting links between the parties who work in Bengal proper and the Eastern Bengal and Assam dacoity gangs, but no definite evidence on which action could be taken has ever been established against him.

One Bhupati Bose is also mentioned by Mr Denham as being a supporter of the gang. This man is a well-to-do broker for the firm of Norlinger & Co., Calcutta.

The arrest of Kartik Chandra Dutt was rather a shock to the members of this struggling and ill-organised gang, some of the members of which commenced to wander about the country performing independently what they called the work of their country, an expression which has now become a

popular euphemism for leading an idle and more or less criminal existence. A notable example of the independent "*Kaj*" was the Hatigarh trespass case, in Balasore, when one Lalit Mohan Ganguli, who had gone off on foot dressed in the *Gerua* clothes of a Sadhu and accompanied by two other members, Anil Pal and Gangadhar Ghattak, entered the compound of a Missionary's house at Hatigarh, and threatened a lady Missionary with a revolver, which he carried in his waist. Lalit Ganguli was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment in connection with this case. He maintained a defiant attitude throughout the period of his imprisonment. He threatened me and several other police officers, who interviewed him in jail, and declared that on his release from jail, he intended to resume *Deshar Kaj* (the country's work). Since his release from jail, however, he has been leading a rather disreputable life, but he is regarded as distinctly dangerous and is being kept under close surveillance.

To return to the Manicktolla bomb conspiracy, the under-trial prisoners in this case were at first allowed all the liberties to which under-trial could ever be entitled. They mixed freely with one another in the jail. A large number of visitors were permitted to visit them, and from all accounts great freedom and laxity was allowed at the time of these visits. Food was sent to them from outside and there is little doubt that they were enjoying the admiration and encouragement of a very large majority of the educated Hindu population of Bengal. They received a rude shock when one of the leading members of their party, Norendra Nath Gossain, appeared one day in the witness box as an approver, and it was soon decided among them that Norendra Nath Gossain must be murdered. The following account given by one of the prisoners in strict confidence to the police, will give an idea of the state of affairs at the Alipur jail at that time :

"A month after our admission into the jail, there was a proposal amongst us that we must make some plan for escape. Barin said that without help from outside and without firearms inside we cannot succeed. One day B. C. Chatterji, Barrister-

at-Law, interviewed Barin and said "that some plan must be devised for your escape, I can help with men and arms." At the time of this interview, Arabindo Babu was in hospital. Barin came back and called out five of the accused—Sailendra Nath Bose, Upendra Nath Banerji, Hem Chandra Das, Nalini Nath Gupta, Sudhir Sircar and some others, and told them of his conversation with B. C. Chatterji. He said at the time that we cannot all escape and only four selected by ballot shall escape, so that we can do some work outside. Kanai, Nalini, Kunja Lal Saha and another were selected by votes. Barin sent intimation of the selection to Arabindo on a slip to the hospital next morning. Barin wrote a letter to B. C. Chatterji—an ordinary letter—and that letter was sent by post through the Senior Hospital Assistant. It was stated in the letter that four men (named above) were selected and he was asked to collect men and to supply arms. Barin also wrote letters to Sudhangsu Jiban Rai, Preo Sankar Rai, Srish Chandra Ghose of Chandernagore, and Basanta Banerji of Chandernagore, to see B. C. Chatterji at his house in Bhowanipur. These letters were posted through the same doctor. B. C. Chatterji replied that he had arranged men and weapons and sent a man to Dacca. At this stage the code was communicated to all these persons and all subsequent communications were in code language. These letters were received through the same doctor generally after 11 p. m. and they (the outsiders) also used to come to the doctor's place at that time to receive letters. B. C. Chatterji asked Barin by letter to suggest a plan of escape and means of the introduction of firearms. Barin consulted Sailendra Nath Bose who made a sketch of the wards and the surroundings of the jail and ward No. 23. Barin and Hem Das sketched out a plan of the north wall showing the jute godown, cook-shed and privy, and indicating a way from the north wall to the ward where the prisoners were. It was first suggested that seven revolvers should be introduced packed in pillows. This was communicated to Basanta Banerji of Chandernagore. On receipt of his reply, Barin sent a plan to Sailen Bose showing a rope ladder

drawn by Hem Das. Barin suggested to B. C. Chatterji that some bombs should be collected. B. C. Chatterji replied asking where he could get the ingredients for bombs. Hem Chandra Das sent a description of the ingredients. Barin wrote to B. C. Chatterji asking him to go to Giridih and to take 20 lbs. of dynamite (presumably from the suspect, Monoranjan Guha^{10a}, afterwards deported, who was residing at Giridih and who, we have since heard, used to supply the party with dynamite). B. C. Chatterji wrote that dynamite could not be obtained but that he had collected arms and ammunition and expected men from Dacca. Barin then wrote to Srish Ghose to send strong acid to throw on the face of the guard and a small hand file ; to send also some wax to take impressions of keys. On the 23rd August (Sunday) several of the prisoners were taken to the gate for interview. It had been arranged that a revolver should be brought that day by hand and not packed in a pillow. Barin wore a *dhosa* ; he gave eight annas to the warder to keep off other interviewers. Sudhangsu Jiban Rai and a fat boy of fair complexion name not known, had come to interview Barin, and they and Barin stood close together at the bars. Sudhangsu Jiban Rai handed a packet to Barin and the fat boy gave him a wax ball. The packet was kept among the blankets and clothes until 10 a. m. the next day, when Hem Das took it to the hospital. Hem had decided that the very first thing to do was to shoot Noren Gossain (who though still kept in the Alipur Jail, had been removed from close contact with the other prisoners). When Hem Das came back from the hospital he said that Satyendra Nath Bose, who was in the hospital, said that he could not manage such a big revolver against Noren. This was on the 24th. Kanai Lal Dutt then volunteered to manage it. However, Barin wrote to Srish Ghose of Chander-nagore to send a small revolver. On Sunday, the 30th, Srish Ghose came to interview Barin. All the prisoners were taken to the jail gate. The Jailor took Arabindo and Barin inside the office and gave a chair to Arabindo and another man who had come for an interview. Barin was talking to several boys

at the corner of the Jailor's table. Srish arrived at this time. The Jailor asked whom he wanted to see. He said "Barin". Srish, Barin and the three boys moved on and stood near an almirah. There was no warder near them. Srish handed to Barin a small packet packed up in a cloth and Barin kept it under his *chadar*¹⁰⁷. After the interview the prisoners returned to their wards and Hem Das took the packet and gave it to Kanai Lal Dutt. It was at about noon. That evening Kanai Lal Dutt pretended to be sick and was taken to the hospital. The revolver had been received loaded."

The details of the actual murder in the jail have already been made public in the newspapers. It is known how Kanai and Satyendra had pretended to want to have an interview with Noren Gossain, presumably leading him to believe that they too wanted to confess. Noren Gossain had been brought to the hospital to interview them, when they opened fire on him with their revolvers, chased him out of the hospital and along the path in the jail until he dropped mortally wounded. Kanai Lal Dutt and Satyendra Bose were placed on trial for murder of Norendra Gossain and were both eventually hanged. An extraordinary scene was witnessed at Kalighat at the time of the cremation of Kanai, whose body after the execution was made over to his relations for disposal. Crowds thronged the road, people pushing past one another to touch the bier. The body was strewn with flowers and anointed with oil. Many women, to all appearance of a highly respectable class, followed the funeral procession wailling, while men and boys thronged round shouting "Jai Kanai"! This Kanai Lal Dutt was a person of humble origin, a weaver by caste. He was a native of Tantipara, Serampore, in the Hooghly district, and was perhaps one of the most daring and cold-blooded of the whole gang. He gloried in the deed he had committed and went to his execution without flinching. After the cremation his ashes were being sold in Calcutta, as much as Rs. 5 an ounce being paid by some enthusiasts. It is believed that the supply was made to suit the demand, and that the vast amount of ashes sold in Calcutta as the ashes of Kanai Lal Dutt was

fifty times the genuine amount that ever existed. This affair had a most pernicious effect on the minds of the youths of Bengal ; so much so that in the following January, Lalit Mohan Ganguli, whose name I had already mentioned in connection with the Hatigarh Trespass case, on being arrested in the Hooghly district, under section 54, Criminal Procedure Code, made a false confession to having murdered Sub-Inspector Nanda Lal Banerji. He subsequently admitted that he had made this false confession because it was the dream of his life to have a funeral like Kanai Lal Dutt's.

The murder of Noren Gossain put an immediate stop to the license which had been allowed to the prisoners at the Alipore Jail. Each prisoner was placed in a separate cell and the jail guards were supplemented by strong guards of the Gordon Highlanders. The mischief, however, had been done and the assassination of Noren Gossain put an end to a supplementary case which was under contemplation, in which, had it been proceeded with, such prominent persons as Abinas Chakravarti, the Munsiff, Charu Chandra Dutt, of the Bombay Civil Service, and Subodh Chandra Mulick, of Calcutta, would possibly have been placed on trial under section 121A.

The murder of Noren Gossain took place on the 31st August 1908. In the month of September, a dacoity took place at Bunkadaha, in the Bankura district, and another at Protapchuk, in the Hooghly district. The fact that these two dacoities were political and the work of the revolutionary party, was only disclosed in the course of subsequent enquiries sometime later. On the 16th September, the Bighati dacoity, which has already been mentioned, took place. This case was detected and six persons were put on trial before the Special Tribunal of the High Court, one person, Panna Lal Chatterji, being made an approver. One of the persons placed on trial was Mokhoda Samadhya, who was Sanskrit Professor of the National College. He was a man of considerable learning and very much respected in his native district of Dacca, as well as in Calcutta and Benares. Mokhoda Samadhya's object in actually taking part in this dacoity was to see that none

of the proceeds were misappropriated by the young men for their own use. The person he mistrusted was one Keshab Chandra Dey,¹⁰⁸ who, on a previous occasion, had taken part in dacoity and appropriated a large amount of the profits. Keshab was for long advertised for as an absconder in the Bighati dacoity, but it was subsequently ascertained from Lalit Mohan Chakravarti, the approver in the Howrah gang case, that about the middle of 1909, the members of the gang had put an end to his life, owing to his untrustworthiness and persistence in appropriating the proceeds of dacoities to his own use. This Bighati dacoity was the first case to be tried by a Special Tribunal, of the High Court under Act XIV of 1908. All the accused placed on trial were convicted with the exception of Mokhoda Samadhya who was acquitted, but in consequence of a hint given by Mr. Justice Harington, the Presiding Judge of the Special Tribunal, was subsequently tried by a Judge and jury in Howrah for harbouring offenders. A strong case was made out against him, but the jury found him "not guilty" and the Judge, Mr. S. C. Mullick, accepting the verdict of the jury, acquitted him for the second time. This Mokhoda Samadhya is believed to be a most dangerous character. He is still keeping up his connection with the most desperate ruffians of the revolutionary party. He has been working for some time as contributor to, and Sub-Editor of, the *Nayak*,¹⁰⁹ at present the most frankly seditious newspaper published in Calcutta.

The month of October 1908 passed without any important event. Considerable alarm had been created in the ranks of the revolutionists by wide-spread house searches in Calcutta, which were made in consequence of information received from one of the undertrial prisoners in the jail. These searches were unfortunately practically fruitless, and I have since been informed that information of the intention of the police had leaked out owing to a young boy, Charu Ch. Bose,¹¹⁰ who later on murdered the pleader Ashutosh Biswas,¹¹¹ having in the guise of a sick mendicant, obtained admission to the house of a police officer where he overheard discussion of the

plans, and gave warning to those whose houses were to be searched.

On the 7th November came the audacious attempt on the life of Sir Andrew Fraser. A young lad, Jotindra Nath Rai Chaudhuri, daringly approaching Sir Andrew Fraser, who had gone to address a meeting at the Overtoun Hall, aimed a revolver point-blank at him and drew the trigger twice ; fortunately the hammer of the revolver was defective and both shots missed fire. The boy was seized before he could pull the trigger a third time. He was sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment. He has made statements, though not of a very clear and convincing nature, since his arrest, but it has been gathered from him that the revolver with which he attempted the deed was obtained from the notorious Satish Bose, the Secretary of the *Anusilan Samiti*, who had organised the outrage.

Two days later Sub-Inspector Nanda Lal Banerji was shot in the street in Serpentine Lane in Calcutta. The Sub-Inspector had, after the Muzaffarpur outrage, tracked Profulla Chaki who had accompanied Khudiram Bose at the time of the murder, and had shot himself at the Mokameh Railway Station, in order to avoid being arrested. There was no clue to the perpetrators of this murder for a long time after the outrage. Lalit Ganguli, already referred to, confessed to having committed the murder, but on verification of his confession by a Magistrate, he failed to point out the spot on which the murder had been committed, and eventually admitted that his statement was untrue. It was a year later, on the arrest of Lalit Mohan Chakravarti, that a clear and definite statement was made regarding the perpetrators of this deed,¹¹³ and it was included as one of the overt acts in the indictment under section 121A of the persons charged in the Howrah gang case.

Another bomb outrage on the Eastern Bengal State Railway occurred on the 24th November, and on the 29th a political dacoity at Raita,¹¹⁴ in the Nadia district, which remained undetected until a year later, when one of the persons charged in the Haludbari dacoity¹¹⁴ gave a statement as to the

identity of the culprits. On the 2nd December a dacoity occurred at Morehal¹¹⁵ in the Hooghly district. The villagers turned out on the dacoits and one person, Manmotho Nath Ghose, was wounded by the villagers and was arrested. Several other persons were arrested and confessed to having taken part in the dacoity. The confessions were subsequently retracted and all, with the exception of Manmotho, escaped conviction. The jury were for acquitting Manmotho too, but the Judge referred the matter to the High Court and he was sentenced to seven years. Among the persons who had confessed and retracted in this case was one Jotin Hazra¹¹⁶ of Kurchi, in the Howrah district. This man subsequently gave a considerable amount of information to the police, which was the first clue obtained as to the existence of a formidable dacoity gang under the leadership of a man named, Noni Gopal Sen Gupta, of Sibpur, in Howrah. This Noni Gopal Sen Gupta was a man of some means; he had a fairly prosperous timber business. He had been a student of the City College in Calcutta, and in 1906, had been an applicant for a Police Sub-Inspectorship. He had been a prominent member of the *Anusilan Samiti*, a trusted lieutenant of Satish Bose, with whom he had subsequently quarrelled, after which he had organised the dacoity gang, branches of which were spread over most of the districts of Western Bengal and many districts of the other provinces.

After the attempted assassination of Sir Andrew Fraser, the Government of India, determined on taking prompt repressive measures. The following persons of this province were selected for deportation :

- (1) Monoranjan Guha—Already referred to as a leading agitator, was a person who had supplied dynamite to the Manicktolla conspirators.
- (2) Kristo Kumar Mitter, proprietor and editor of the *Sanjibani* newspaper and a leading political speaker—This gentleman is a Brahmo by religion. He is the father of Miss Kumudini Mitter and of one Sukumar Mitter. The former was suspected

last year of taking part in the printing of seditious leaflets and the latter is believed to have had a close connection with the Manicktolla garden conspiracy, and to have recently been conspiring with others to import fire-arms into India with the assistance of one Virendra Nath Chatterji¹¹⁷, who, since the arrest of Savarkar¹¹⁸, has been one of the leading spirits in the Indian revolutionary party which exists in Paris. Kristo Kumar Mitter himself was believed to have been in sympathy with the party of violence.

- (3) Subodh Chandra Mullick—Already referred to, is a wealthy Calcutta landlord, living at Wellington Square and an intimate friend of Arabindo Ghosh.
- (4) Sachindra Prosad Bose—The founder of the Anti-Circular Society and one who made himself very conspicuous as a touring-agitator in the mufassil. He had considerable influence among students. He used to carry on his work generally under the guidance of Kristo Kumar Mitter.
- (5) Sham Sunder Chakravati¹¹⁹—Who had been connected with the *Sandhya*, which paper was second only to the *Jugantar* in its boldness and violently seditious writings.

Four persons of Eastern Bengal and Assam were deported at the same time, namely Aswini Kumar Dutt, Pulin Das, Bhupesh Nag and Satish Chatterji¹²⁰. Aswini Kumar Dutt is a person to whom I have already referred early in this note, as having snatched away the manuscript of a seditious song that was sung at a meeting in Barisal.

Pulin Behari Das, the head of the Dacca *Anusilan Samiti* was perhaps the most dangerous and troublesome of all the persons selected for deportation. He had succeeded in making a marvellous organisation of the Dacca *Samiti*, with its several branches, and the well-organised and successful dacoities that continue to go on in Eastern Bengal are testimony to Pulin's ability. An Act was introduced and passed in the Legislative

Council (Act XIV of 1908) for the suppression of seditious associations, and providing for the trial of certain cases by a Special Tribunal of three Judges of the High Court, against whose decision there should be no appeal. The Act also made provision that where the evidence of a witness had been recorded by a Magistrate, that evidence should be admissible in the event of the witness being murdered, as in the case of Noren Gossain. This Act has not proved as valuable in practice as it was doubtless intended to be. The value of the suppression of the *Samitis* has been open to question, as it has not really succeeded in breaking up the associations, but has driven the members to carry on their plotting in greater secrecy, where they are not so easily watched by the police as they were when they openly associated together in the old *Samitis*. Suppression of the Dacca branch of the *Anusilan Samiti* followed immediately on the passing of this Act, and the *Šarathi Jubak Mandali* and another *Samiti* at Alka, in the Khulna district, were proclaimed in this province. The head *Anusilan Samiti* at No. 49, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, was not then accepted as being directly connected with the Dacca *Anusilan Samiti*. The two worked on the same lines, and the Calcutta *Anusilan Samiti* was undoubtedly the parent of the Dacca *Samiti*. There was co-operation between the two, and Pulin Das, always put up with Satish Bose at No. 49, Cornwallis Street, when he visited Calcutta. The Government of Bengal, however, decided to defer the proclamation of the Calcutta *Anusilan Samiti* and it was not actually suppressed under the Act until September 1909.

The deportations which were carried out under the old Regulation III of 1818, caused considerable consternation at the time. In the month of January we were practically free from outrages, though recent enquiries have shown that the dacoity party made an unsuccessful attempt to commit a dacoity at Kalacharia, in the Hooghly district, during that month. In February, however, came the murder of Ashutosh Biswas, the Crown Prosecutor of the 24-Parganas, who was

showing exceptional ability in the prosecution of the Manicktolla bomb conspiracy. Ashutosh Biswas was shot in broad daylight in the Court compound at Alipur by a youth named Charu Bose, whom I have already mentioned. All efforts made to get from Charu Bose before his execution any information as to the instigators of the deed failed. It was subsequently discovered that the revolver which he used had belonged to one Annoda Mohan Roy, a rather eccentric zaminder, who, like many of his class, was exempted from the provisions of the Arms Act. This same Annoda Roy is at present under trial on a charge of forging Government currency notes, and the exhibits seized in the search of his house show that he has acquired marvellous skill in this work, some of his thousand-rupee notes being almost perfect imitations. Whether Annoda had anything to do with the murder of Ashutosh Biswas or not, I regard as uncertain. At first our information was that he had not, and that the revolver had been stolen from his house by a young son of his, since dead, whose connection with the revolutionary party was known. It seems, however, that Ashutosh Biswas, in addition to the work he was carrying on in connection with the Manicktolla bomb conspiracy, was also conducting the prosecution of some persons charged with uttering counterfeit coins. Among them was one Bilash Sirkel, who had been employed in Annoda's house. Information obtained some months after the murder indicated that this Bilash Sirkel had actually instigated Charu Bose to commit the murder, and had placed the revolver in his hand. This case was followed by a temporary cessation of assassinations or attempts, except for the bomb outrages on the Eastern Bengal State Railway. One outrage had occurred on the very day of the murder. The Viceroy had left Sealdah that afternoon for a shooting trip in Eastern Bengal and Assam, when a bomb was thrown at the first train that passed up after the Viceroy's Special. Persons who subsequently confessed to these outrages stated that the intention had been to throw the bomb at the Viceroy's Special,

But that finding the line too closely guarded by police, they had been unable to accomplish this and after the police moved away, had thrown the bomb at the first train that came along. After this outrage, punitive police were posted along the Eastern Bengal State Railway between Barrackpore and Calcutta, and special detective arrangements were made for watching the line. As a reply to these measures on the 4th April another bomb outrage took place, the culprit himself travelling in an almost empty train and hurling his bomb from one train into another. Some persons were injured in this occurrence, but it was the last of the actual outrages. On the 16th April, a cocoanut bomb was found lying on the side of the line near Balliaghatta, and it was a few days after this that we obtained the clue to the culprits which enabled us to put a stop to the outrages, though not to bring the offenders to justice.

With the exception of these bomb outrages and the murder of Ashutosh Biswas, the year 1909 was free from murders, or attempted murders, but dacoities by the *Bhadralog* gangs became frequent. The principle of raising money by dacoity had all along had many hot opponents in persons otherwise in full sympathy with political outrages. Still it was part of the plan of campaign preached by the *Jugantar* and had more advocates than opponents in the revolutionary party. In Bengal two large organisations, allied, but practically independent of one another, existed for the commission of these dacoities, the object of which, according to the approvers and informers, was to collect money for the purchase of arms and for the payment of other expenses of the extremist political parties. These dacoits had no hope of being at any near date in a position to be anything big in the way of open rebellion, though this was their ultimate goal. They intended, after they had collected a sufficiency of arms, to commence the looting of Government Treasuries, by which means they expected to be able to possess themselves of a large quantity of Government money. They were prepared to fight the police guards on the Treasuries. None of the collections of weapons that have

been recovered so far have been of a very formidable nature, though a very fair amount of serviceable rifle ammunition had been collected, and some of the rifles and revolvers only require to be properly cleaned and kept in order to be of a thoroughly serviceable nature.

One of the dacoity bands consisted mainly of the members of the old *Samitis* of the Jessore and Khulna districts, which had ceased to exist openly after the passing of Act XIV of 1908.

A dacoity committed at Nangla, in the Khulna district, on the 16th August 1909, led to the detection of the culprits of this gang.¹²¹ The houses of some of the suspects being searched in Calcutta, a considerable quantity of correspondence and documents were obtained, showing clearly the political nature of this band. Manuscript works on revolution and the manufacture of explosives were found to show that some of the members were not satisfied with dacoity and had designs of attempting other forms of outrage. One Abani Bhusan Chakravarti, a leading member of this gang, who had previously belonged to Kartick Dutt's *Sarathi Jubak Mandali* gang, and who was suspected of having taken part in the Bighati dacoity case, on arrest, made a confession which he repeated before a Magistrate. His confession was verified and was accepted as true and Abani was made an approver. On his testimony, backed by a certain amount of corroborative evidence, mostly documentary, several persons were actually placed on trial on a charge of dacoity, before a Special Tribunal of the High Court. Abani, however, retracted his confession in the High Court and the specific charge of dacoity had to be withdrawn against all the accused, except Abani himself, who, on his own confession, was convicted and sentenced to 7 years' transportation. The remainder of the accused, together with others, including Abani, were then placed on trial before the Special Tribunal on a charge under section 121A. This prosecution was very successful, 11 out of 13 of the accused persons being convicted by the Tribunal and sentenced to long terms of transportation.

Dacoities were occurring in other parts of the country and on the 24th July, one took place at Netra,¹²² in the 24-Parganas, which was in time to lead to important results. There was no doubt from the commencement that this dacoity was one of a political nature. The dacoits had openly told complainant that they were working for the cause of their country, that he must give up his money, and that when the country was free, he would get it back. Suspicion fell upon the right people, but there was no evidence to justify their being placed on their trial. One young man named Lalit Chakravarti *alias* Benga, of the village of Netra, had been suspected. He absconded and was lost sight of, but was subsequently arrested on the 27th October at the Lowis Jubilee Sanitarium in Darjeeling, where he had been making himself conspicuous by taking an active part in the Partition Day celebration on the 16th October. This Lalit Chakravarti was a youth of a very dangerous type, addicted to perpetual cigarette smoking and drinking strong tea. He had grounds for great bitterness against the other members of his arrest, as they had failed to supply him with funds sufficient for his requirements after he had to leave his home and go into hiding. It was doubtless a strong resentment he felt towards them for their behaviour that made him volunteer information regarding the constitution and the doing of the dacoity gang. He made his first statement to me in Darjeeling two days after his arrest, declining at first to repeat it before a Magistrate, though he expressed his readiness to help the police secretly. He gave the name of Noni Gopal Sen Gupta, of Howrah, as the leader of the gang, and named a large number of persons in Calcutta and the districts of both provinces, many of them men of high educational qualifications and ostensibly perfectly respectable. He furnished us with the whereabouts of several persons, whom we had lost sight of, including one Taranath Roy Chaudhuri¹²³, an absconder of the Manicktolla bomb case, for whose arrest a large reward had been offered without success. Taranath had been absconding then for 18 months, and it was on information furnished by Lalit Chakravarti that

he was arrested in Benaras. He gave information regarding several undetected cases and narrated the vows of the society, which novices were bound to take on initiation. He said that their society had among its members men of the 10th Jats Regiment, then stationed at Alipur, and it was this information that led to the discovery of an organised attempt to tamper with the loyalty of the 10th Jats, for which proceedings were instituted under section 131, of the Indian Penal Code ; the case, however, eventually falling to the ground, together with the whole Howrah gang case, which was instituted on Lalit's information. The statement of Lalit Mohan Chakravarti made before the committing Magistrate of the Howrah gang case¹²⁴, Mr. Duval, is well worth perusal, *and though discredited by the Chief Justice in the trial, there is not the slightest doubt to all who know the history of the arrest of Lalit, that it is in the main true, though it may contain a few inaccuracies, the result of a desire for self-glorification and a persistence in filling in blanks where memory failed.

Almost simultaneously with the arrest of Lalit Chakravarti in Darjeeling, there occurred a dacoity at Haludbari, in the Nadia district. Six of the dacoits were arrested at the Mirpore Railway Station under circumstances which left no doubt that they had been concerned in the dacoity. On one of them a number of small thin rubber bags were found, each containing a small quantity of white powder. These were at first taken for throw down crackers, but were subsequently found to be doses of cyanide of potassium, which had been distributed just before the dacoits were starting, the object being that if any man was arrested he should poison himself, so that he could not betray his companions. The pills had been collected again before the party split up and were all found on the person of one man. He, however, on his arrest, carefully refrained from availing himself of the opportunity of taking one of them. One of the persons arrested, Sailendra Kumar Das, the son of a Munsiff, made a confession and told a story about the party to which he belonged, which corroborated in most of

* See Appendix

its details the story given by Lalit Chakravarti. The two stories, however, were conflicting in regard to the Netradacoity, in which Sainen Das had also taken part. On the specific charge in the Haludbari dacoity, six persons, were convicted by the Special Tribunal of the High Court and these same persons, together with those who had been acquitted, were included in the charge of waging war against the King in the Howrah gang case.

When the decision was arrived at to proceed against Noni Gopal Sen Gupta and other persons mentioned by Lalit Mohan Chakravarti, numerous arrests were made and it was shortly after the first batch of arrests that Khan Bahadur Shamsul Alum, the Deputy Superintendent of the Special Department, was murdered in the corridor of the Calcutta High Court, by a youth named Birendra Dutt Gupta, who, the day following his arrest, confessed that he had been instigated to commit the murder by one Jotindra Nath Mukherjee, a steno-typist in the office of the Financial Secretary to the Government of Bengal. In consequence of Lalit Chakravarti's statement, the houses of some of the relations of Jotindra Mukherji at Krishnagar had been searched by Shamsul Alum in person, about a month before the murder. Here, again, the weapon with which the murder was committed, was traced to an exempted person. It belonged to a Deputy Magistrate of the Cuttack district, who had lost it when on a visit to Calcutta, under circumstances which left little doubt to the police mind that it had been stolen by a youth named Suresh Mazumder¹⁸⁸ alias Poran who had made it over to Jotin, who had employed Birendra Dutt Gupta to commit the deed. This Biren Dutt Gupta was a youth who had had some training under Satish Bose, of the Anusilan Samiti, at the Gosaba Agricultural Settlement in the Sundarbans. The day before his execution Birendra repeated his confession to the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta. An effort was made to get the execution postponed, in order that Birendra Dutt Gupta might be properly cross-examined. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, declined to agree to this proposal. Mr J. N. Roy, the Barrister,

who had hastily appeared to defend Jotindra Nath Mukherji, refused to cross-examine. Birendra Dutt Gupta was hanged the following morning¹²⁶ and when the case eventually came to be tried in the High Court, the confession of Biren was declared inadmissible and Jotindra Nath Mukherji walked triumphantly out of the dock.

The wholesale arrest and detention in *hajut* of the persons charged in this Howrah conspiracy case, whatever may be said of the judicial result, gave Bengal a year of peace. Khulna and Jessore were the only districts in the province that showed any sign of political crime, but the police had again a clue to the gang which was committing the dacoities in Khulna and Jessore. A small batch of them were captured and brought to justice in the dacoity which occurred at Mahisa, in the Jessore district, on the 5th July, and a few weeks later the gang was pounced upon, most of the members being in Calcutta, and a case under section 400, Indian Penal Code, was instituted against the members. The capture of this gang set even Khulna and Jessore free from political crime. It is well-known, how the case was eventually withdrawn in March 1911, the accused all pleading guilty and being discharged on executing bonds to come up for judgment when called upon¹²⁷.

At the beginning of January it began to be whispered that the result of the Howrah gang case was going to be wholesale acquittal and that the Chief Justice had already made up his mind to that effect¹²⁸. In February certain information was received by the Bengal S. D. regarding a number of suspects, mostly residents of the district of Faridpur, but residing in Calcutta, who were said to be taking a leading part in the dacoities that were still occurring in Eastern Bengal and Assam. The information was communicated to the Eastern Bengal and Assam authorities and on the 15th February, at the request of the Eastern Bengal and Assam Police, the houses of the suspects were searched.

A week later the general peace that had followed the arrest of the accused in the Howrah conspiracy case, was broken by

the murder in the streets of Calcutta at about 7 o'clock in the evening, of one Srish Chandra Chakravarti,¹⁹⁹ the youth, who in 1908, had been a member of the revolutionary party, but who, of his own accord, had gone to the police and turned an informer. This Srish had given the first clue which led to the detection of the Bighati dacoity case. He had furnished the police with large amount of valuable information and had eventually been taken into the Calcutta establishment as a Head Constable, being still employed, however, on the collection of secret information and still associating with the members of the revolutionary party. It is a singular coincidence, if it is only a coincidence, that this murder took place on the evening of the day on which Jotindra Nath Mukherji, the instigator of the murder of Khan Bahadur Shamsul Alum, was set free from dock at the High Court²⁰⁰. It is not believed that Jotindra Nath Mukherjee had any direct connection with this murder, but it is likely that Jotin's release put fresh heart into the people who had been contemplating further outrages but hesitating to act.

After the arrest of the Manicktolla gang in 1908, the remnant of their party, we are told, had gone off to Chandernagore, had taken a prominent part in abetting the murder of the approver, Noren Gossain. The difficulty of getting a watch on the doings of suspects in Chandernagore has always been enormous and the police had failed to keep up-to-date information of the doings of Srish and the other Chandernagore suspects.

On the 2nd March, a youth called Noni Gopal Mukherji, a half-starved, wretched looking lad of about 16 or 17, threw a bomb into the motor-car of Mr Cowley, of the Public Works Department, as it was leaving the centre porch of Writers' Buildings. This bomb was scientifically made. It contained picric acid with a slight mixture of chlorate of potash and a small paper tube of fulminate of mercury intended to act as a detonator. It was cylindrical in shape with a long handle by which Noni Gopal Mukherji had been holding it. He had carried it holding it by the handle with a cover of thin tissue

paper over it to make it appear to be a bouquet of flowers being carried from a florist's. The intention was to assassinate some police officer, possibly Mr Denham or Mr Plowden, but fortunately the bomb, though thrown with great force, struck against the calf of Mr Cowley's leg and fell on to the coir mat on the floor of the car. Had it struck a hard flat surface it would almost certainly have exploded and the result would have been certain death to Mr Cowley, and possibly other people within a zone of some 40 or 50 yards. The boy, Noni Gopal Mukherji was found to be a brother of Police Inspector Jogendra Nath Mukherji, who, in the previous year, had served three months in the S. D. engaged on political enquiries. Noni Gopal was said to have been led away from his home by one Jyotish Ghose¹⁸¹, M. A. of Chinsurah, and ex-Professor of the Hooghly College, whose services had been dispensed with for the prominent part taken by him in the Provincial Conference held at Hooghly in 1909. According to Noni Gopal Mukherji's own confession, he had come to Calcutta at the request of Jyotish Ghose, through whom he had made the acquaintance of Norendra Banerji¹⁸² of Gondalpara at Chandernagore, and of Srish Ghose, of Chandernagore—the same Srish Ghose who had been a member of the Manicktolla gang and who had taken to the Alipore Jail the revolver with which Norendra Gossain was shot. This occurrence revealed the fact that the remnant of the Manicktolla gang, residing in Chandernagore, was still bent on carrying on the work of assassination and that they were still a party whose liberty was dangerous to the community. Organised arrangements are now being made for the appointment of a special staff for keeping watch on these Chandernagore suspects as well as on the principal political suspects of Calcutta and the Bengal mufassil districts. According to the statement of Lalit Chakravarti, the numbers of the revolutionary party in both Bengals amounted in 1909 to between 5,000 and 6,000. I do not think myself that Lalit Chakravarti was exaggerating the case, though it is possible that the number actually prepared to risk their lives or liberty is very much smaller

After the wild scene attendant on the funeral of Kanai Lal Dutt, the Government disposed of the bodies of persons executed for political murders, inside the jail wall, and all demonstration of the kind were prohibited. This has doubtless put a stop to the determination that existed in many youthful minds to make an end like Kanai. It is satisfactory that in the last two cases in which the actual offenders have been arrested, namely, the murder of Shamsul Alam, and the Dalhousie Square bomb case, the boys have been persuaded to betray their instigators. Every case gives to the members of the revolutionary party fresh lessons in caution and renders the work of the police in subsequent cases more and more difficult. Though the actual members of the anarchist party are perhaps decreasing those who remain, work with a caution and cunning which it is hard for the police to combat.

From reports recently received by the S. D. it seems likely that a large section of the revolutionary party will set themselves against the continuance of the old political dacoities. Many persons who are ardent advocates of assassination and of anything that can injure the Government or the English officials, are strongly opposed to a continuance of dacoities committed on their fellow-countrymen, as in their opinion such acts do harm to the cause by setting the people against the revolutionists. These advocates of abandoning the ordinary dacoities, however propose that the dacoity hands should in future turn their attention to the looting of Government Treasuries, Post Offices and other places where Government money is kept. The idea of looting Treasuries, commencing with Subdivisional Treasuries, has long been in the minds of the party, and it was part of the programme towards which Barindra Ghosh himself was working. Some of the acquitted, accused of the Howrah gang case have since their release been discussing the possibility of blowing up Government buildings, the Bank of Bengal and the Currency Office in Calcutta have been discussed. They believe that a successful explosion at either of these places would enable members of the party to

rush into the debris and fill their pockets with looting before the police arrived on the scene.

There have been whispers of the possibility of achieving great work by train-wrecking during the King-Emperor's visit to the country, but no detailed schemes for this have yet been discussed. The proposed assassination of officials seems to find favour with all branches of the revolutionist party, though the members are not so ready now as they were three years ago to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of accomplishing a murder. The present proposals are for murder by poison, and efforts are to be made to get conspirators into the service of unpopular officials, as khanshamahs or cooks' mates.

This same scheme was discussed two or three years ago, as also a scheme for poisoning by means of samples of cigarettes or sweetmeats.

In the Dalhousie Square bomb outrage the boy who threw the bomb had been prepared for what they call the country's work, for over a year before he was actually selected to commit a crime. We have reports of a number of boys who have left their homes under circumstances which lead to suspicion that they have done so at the instigation of mischievous persons with mental power over them, under whose influence they have fallen, with a view to their being trained for a '*Kaj*' as it is called. The training consists of wandering about the country in poverty, of the study of religious books, of exercise in the endurance of hardships, and I have been told that some of these boys are made to sit down and watch goats and other animals being tortured to death, in order to harden their hearts and get them used to the idea of killing things, and to the sight of blood.

The wiser men among the heads of the revolutionary party consider that little can be accomplished with the Army. The successful escape of the persons charged with tampering with the loyalty of the 10th Jats, against whom the evidence was to all minds but those of the Judges, very strong and convincing has stimulated the determination of some sections of the party to press on with the work of preaching their cause

among the soldiers. It is proposed also that endeavour should be made to gain over the rank and file of the police. It is proposed also that every endeavour should be made to raise money for a revolutionary nationalist fund sufficiently large to enable the hands of some foreign power to aid in an outbreak in India when England is next involved in a foreign war.¹⁸⁸

Though dacoity has been deprecated as a means of raising money, the heads of the revolutionary party are strongly in favour of efforts being made to collect money by means of forging currency notes and counterfeiting coins.

Police officers should bear in mind that the revolutionists are now acting with extreme caution. It cannot be expected that a large party like the Manicktolla party will ever again be discovered sitting over an arsenal of guns, revolvers and explosives. It must be remembered, too, that nearly all these mischievous associations in the past have had an innocent exterior, often one that had brought them the support and admiration of persons who were ignorant of their real nature, and that they will be similarly screened in the future.

F. C. DALY

The 7th August 1911,

Dy. Insp.-Genl. of Police, S. D.

APPENDIX

EXHIBIT 298

(For prosecution)

(Sd) S. N. LAHIRI,
2-5-1908

(Initials) A. S. J.
24-11-08

Strictly private
very urgent

GIRGAON,
The 21st December 1907

MY DEAR GHOSH,

Why did you allow yourself to undo so much of what you had done by putting yourself in the hands of Mr. B. G. Tilak. Even after such a long stay in this Presidency, how is it you overlooked the well-known fact that among the Dekhanis, that old spirit of *Ashem* which killed an Empire is as living and active as ever? It pained me to see that, of all persons, a man of your shrewdness and knowledge of human nature, should have seriously thought that the infant nationalism which you have nursed so lovingly and tenderly could grow into manhood without mishap by entrusting it to the care of a Dekhani, who can never forget what he owes to his own good self, even on occasions when others would be simply carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment.

Living at such a distance, you cannot know that your cause has been nearly killed by T. at the Standing Congress Committee. His personal disappointment re Presidentship has so unhinged him, that he cannot, in this matter, realize the effect of what he does, on his own reputation, much less on the cause, whose leadership has been thrust on him by you.

Here is the story, and you judge for yourself.

You know such parties had arranged to shunt the Congress to Madras. This roused the resentment of the true leaders of Nationalists in Madras—the well-known Vijayaraghavachar of Baleum. He set to work to drive back the Congress to

Nagpur. He prevailed upon the Hindus and others to write strongly against it and managed to come here himself at great expense as Madras representative. Taking advantage of this position, he worked up all the members of the Committee in favour of Nagpur. Gokhale was found to be as keen as you or I to have it in Nagpur. So Mehta was rendered helpless. But T. wrecked the whole by his cunning : knowing that pressure would be brought on him to be reasonable, he avoided all his true friends whom he always consults. Dr. Deshmukh was avoided and T. put up at *Sardargriha*. When in the morning, myself and Mr. Vijayaraghavachar went to settle this matter with him, he carefully avoided both of us as much as possible. I then pointedly drew his attention to the fact that he was no more a *Kesari* Editor, but the leader of a great party, and he must, as in duty bound, see in all he does, that his cause not only suffers but gains strength everywhere. He sent us away by saying he would settle everything with the Nagpuris all right, and then put forward poor Khaparde to take all the odium, and undid all that Vijayaraghavachar had done on a trivial point, although he was assured in almost so many words, that every man he wants, would be put on the Committee. His life-long friend V. was crest-fallen and had to vote for Surat. Your great leader never realized how you would find difficulty in explaining this conduct. This distinction, is needed (initial), because you have yet to bring up other provinces to the level of Bengal. For instance, take Surendranath. No matter what he is to you, he is literally worshipped in other provinces. So, however right you may be, if you go to attack him directly and not indirectly by an attack on his views, that reverence comes in the way of appreciating your attitude and a prejudice against the *Bande Mataram*, and eventually against what it represents arises. To an organ which is engaged in the pioneer work, this means great loss by the curtailment of its field of work. Hence my suggestion. Dear Ghose, I know how unworthy I am to make any suggestion to one who has consecrated his life to the great cause. To take them for what they are worth, only know that they are made

in all sincerity and are intended to ward off possible danger. The very aloofness gives an advantage in realizing the true perspective, which the actual worker is sometimes apt to miss.

I hope you will stay for a few days in these parts. If you are here till the 5th, I shall see you. If not, I must be content with this letter.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) S. S....

In this letter I have spoken freely about T. because I felt it necessary to tell you his true position for the sake of the cause. I am as good friend of his as before, and but for this necessity, these facts and opinions would have died with me unknown to anybody.

Poor Gokhale was thoroughly honest and did his best to put in check that great Lion, who, of course wanted to avoid Nagpur. Both he and V. had to eat the humble pie, and poor V., who spent so much money, time and energy to retain Nagpur, and who has been T's supporter all his life, spent the whole night in my room, sleepless, and cursing poor Khaparde for his supposed stubbornness; of course V. was considered innocent. If the matter had stopped here, the high air we put on now of our having yielded everything would have been impossible. V. was as you say, and as is true—the hand of Providence that saved the nation for the party at least. T's henchman Vasudev Joshi of . . . Bala happened to be early in the morning to visit me. He had just come from Poona. When he came I refused to have anything to do with him or his Poona party, and told him how the cause had been betrayed. He felt keenly also and immediately saw T. and took him severely to task. The result was T. and Joshi came to me and T. began to justify. *Vijaya*, who was in the opposite house, came in, and the whole thing was thrashed out, and then T. realized how nearly he had damned his cause. He admitted that *Vijaya* had told him in so many words at the meeting that the very persons they

wanted would be in the Committee. (You know that was the only point left.) Then Vijaya, as a true selfless nationalist hit upon the plan of even yet saving the situation for the party, if not for the Nagpuris; so we settled that a letter should be written in the way it was, and the money should be sent in the way it was sent. Dr. Deshmukh, to whom you have to look to as a leader of your party here, at once came to our assistance, gave Rs. 10,000 Government notes, and they were tendered, and when in the evening I went to the *Sardargriha* and took poor Khaparde to task for his obstinacy, in the very presence of T., he plainly said that he was guided by T., whom he purposely made to sit close to him. Thus you see that T. was entirely responsible for thus playing into the hands of Mehta, and yet poor Khaparde is hated for it all.

You realize for yourself with what force you could have supported your great chief, if the subsequent drama had not been played. All this for what? Because I thought he would not be out even on the working Committee, and thus in spite of the fact that his friend Vijaya has obtained a distinct promise from the Mehtaites that he would be put on it and *almost* told him so, in the very presence of Mehta.

You have given your life to the cause and nursed your cause with such splendid results till you allowed yourself to be guided by T., the *Bande Mataram* kept such a high level, that every day you added hundreds to the ranks of nationalism. This would have gone on unchecked, and if it had, by next year, there would hardly have been more than a dozen moderates! Mehta and his *immediate* satellites. But alas! Within about a month, by your bringing the *Bande Mataram* to the level of the *Kesari*, which has the special knack of bringing in personalities in the most offensive manner, to very, very limited extent. Why should you have transferred the personal squabble between Tilak and Gokhale, which everybody here knows to be at the bottom of all tolerances in the Dekan policies, into Bengal? Do you not really know that Gokhale is a first Nationalist himself and only works under a veil?

Even Morley found this out, and yet you single him out in your criticisms. Even supposing you are right, it is a wrong policy. His life of a political *Sanyasi* has made a great impression on people here, and even among the Tilakites he is not now regarded with the same feeling as when he was in the Fergusson College. You know I am a Tilakite, and Mr. N. C. Kelkh, the Editor of the *Mahratta*, is one. And yet, we don't think he is the same man now as when he made his idiotic apology. If you were a witness of the bold way in which he refused to be dictated to by Mehta as to the attitude to be taken towards the Boycott and *Swadeshi* in his Presidential address, you would not have made the mistake which you have undoubtedly done. I don't mean you should not criticise his moderate cloak, but do it with a saving clause, Mr. T. is incapable of fairness towards him, and the latter of the former. Let not their personal animosities be drafted into the national cause. That is my humble suggestion.

You have worked wonders in two years. I beseech you not to undo it by giving yourself away to a man who, no doubt, has done much, but who cannot forget his self, even when the fight is thickest. You know, although I have done very little for our cause, I have been in close touch with it for the last 20 years in both the Presidencies, and with the knowledge I say that if you persist in the mistake you have committed in making T. a leader of your cause to be named in the same breath as Lala, you have sacrificed your life for nothing. Your cause will be damned in two months. Don't discard him by all means, give him a high place, but don't make him at any time your leader. Do you not remember what I told you in Baroda, when we were talking with D, that T. would have petitioned to Government for his release, if they had not anticipated the petition was being discussed by him with his then Secretary, Mr. R. Bodas ? And it was not a fort night since he told me that we should be careful, as the Government had woken up too early. Is such a man to lead the cause, consecrated by the sacrifice of so many absolutely disinterested souls—your good self, Bhupendra, Aswini and others ?

I am sorry I shall not be at Surat. In order to prevent you from losing your cause, by not knowing your true men, let me tell you that for Dekan you take Dr. Deshmukh as the guide, and of course T.—For Madras, your leader is Salem Vijata—. Poor man, he has taken the defeat of his endeavours so much to heart, that he has not come. I got his wire. He does not want to be openly on your list, because in P. S. D., Madras, his utility would cease. So, you must let him alone in your formal constitution, but always take his counsel in ordering your affairs. If G. R. Subramanyar had done much by lecturing, V. has leavened the whole mass by introducing the nationalist *virus* into the *Mahajan Sobha* and the *Hindus*.

In order to avoid the mistakes which, owing to the infancy of your pet, may at any time prove absolutely fatal, organize it formally under the leadership of nobody else but Lala Lajpat Roy. He is a tried leader with whom nationalism is as much religion as with all true nationalists. He has the oratory, ability, and thorough honesty of purpose, and above all, the necessary coolness and courage to be a safe leader. Till T. be a *local* leader as before in Bombay and G. S. for Madras, you will, of course, include in your cabinet Dr. D., who, you know, has done more by way of organizing public institutions on the nationalists' side in five years than many others during thirty years.

Finally, in whatever you do, choose proper men who are sound not only in mind but also in heart.

And-and, for God's sake, do not allow the *Bande Mataram* to descend to personalities—no matter how serious the provocation. Let it be the expounder of the *cult* of nationalism and that alone, and leaving the actual working severely alone, registering the progress, but taking no sides. Let other papers do the needful in that direction—whether consciously or unconsciously. You observed this up to now, and made such tremendous progress. By mixing your paper up in the details, passions are roused and your paper will not then appeal to those that are on the other side, no matter however right you may be in the side you have chosen.

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER ADDRESSED BY ALARAM
SANYASI, OF ALLAHABAD, TO THE BENGAL
GOVERNMENT

DISLOYALTY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ARYA SAMAJ.

I am a fervent well wisher of the British Government and the public generally. It is my firm conviction that the sovereignty which the Empress exercises over India is a gift of God himself, and any person who tries to subvert the British Government acts against the will of God. I am accustomed to wander from village to village, mix with the members of all secret associations, probe their real feelings towards the British Government, and lecture on the subjects dear to their heart. I have, on several previous occasions, given secret intelligence to Government, and am now going to give such information regarding the disaffected spirit of certain sections of society as would enable Government to punish the persons who may be mischievously inclined. In 1857, when Nana Rao Peshwa revolted, I was in Kapurthala State, where my father was a havildar in the army.

After the mutiny was put down, Nana Rao Peshwa wandered from place to place as a *sadhu* (ascetic), and Dayanand Saraswati also accompanied him. It was in his company that Dayanand imbibed his ideas and feelings. He learnt Sanskrit and lectured to many English-educated Babus on the evils of the Hindu religion. He exhorted them to renounce the Hindu religion, and unite in driving out the English from India and establishing a national kingdom. He also preached many things which coincided with Christian views, such as the abolition of caste distinctions and the evils of idolatry and the foolishness of making *sraddhs* and pilgrimages. The Christians flattered themselves that the preaching of Dayanand would promote the cause of Christianity. They never thought for a moment that Dayanand was indirectly sowing the seeds of discontent against the British Government in the minds of Hindus.

With a view to ingratiate the Muhammadans, Dayanand exposed the evils of idolatry and preached destruction of

temples. He wrote in one of his books, called *Satyarth Prakash*, that it is very useful to eat the flesh of cows. The Musalmans thought that Dayanand was an advocate of the Musalman religion, but they could not grasp the truth that he was secretly trying to kill the Muhammadans and drive the English out of India.

Dayanand had at first tried to incite the Rajas of Rajputana to rebellion. He had made the Rajas of Odeypur, Jodhpur, and Shahpur his disciples, and still the Residents and Chief Commissioners knew nothing of the matter. But when all the Hindus of Rajputana did not coincide with the views of Dayanand, he contrived other means for raising insurrection among them. He declared that the Vedas was the sacred book of the Hindus, and it enjoined caste as based on subdivision of labour, and not as a hereditary institution. This circumstance brought over to his side some millions of Hindus of the lower caste. He then began to publish a journal called *Satyarth Prakash*, in which he condemned the temples, &c., of the Hindus. He also wrote in it some political articles of inflammatory character to the effect that it was very injudicious to levy duty on salt and other articles. This led thousands of illiterate Hindus to become his partisans and entertain seriously the idea of stamping out British rule from India. Dayanand then declared that it was very desirable for Hindus to learn Sanskrit, and with that object he opened many Sanskrit *pathshalas*. By this means also he obtained the adhesion of several foolish Hindus, who were made to believe that they would one day wrest the sovereign power from the hands of the British. He then began to organise *Arya Samajes* or Associations, and declared that Aryan was the original name of the Hindus the latter appellation having been given to them by the Musalmans, who used the word "Hindu" in quite a different sense and as a term of reproach and contempt. Thousands of foolish Hindus became his disciples when they read this, and their hearts were filled with rancorous feelings against the Muhammadans who had given them the nickname of Hindus. Thousands of Hindus of the lower orders joined

the Arya Samaj with the hope of becoming Brahmans and Kshatriyas. Dayanand then declared that the cow was an object of veneration to every Hindu, and began to organise associations for the protection of cows. He thought by this means to bring over to his side some 20 crores of Hindus, with whose assistance he would drive the English out of India. He published and distributed all over India pamphlets regarding the protection of cows, and his disciples went about from village to village collecting thousands of rupees as subscription towards the cow-protection fund. Mohon Lal Marwari, of Farakhabad, a leading Arya Samaji, began to publish a monthly journal, called *Godhurma Prakash*. It contained chiefly political articles calculated to foment dissensions between Hindus and Musalmans, and instigate the former to rise against the sovereign power. This journal had a wide circulation all over the country, as the disciples of Dayanand were to be found throughout India. An Arya Samaji wrote a book called *Goraksha*, and Mohan Lal, of Farakhabad, had it published and distributed in all the villages. It contained seditious articles, on reading which every Hindu would be excited to slaughter the English and the Muhammadans. It is distinctly stated there—"Rise, O Hindus, and draw your swords and go there where your enemies are standing, and quickly kill the Muhammadans and English." In the same book, but in a different part, the following occurs :—"May God order me to destroy all the Muhammadans". Jagat Narayan, the writer of that book, lives at present in the house of Lakshmi Das Kshemji at Bombay. Dayanand wrote another book called *Sytyarth Prakash*, and the Arya Samajists had it printed and distributed all over India. Englishmen and Muhammadans have been called "Yavana" in it, and their religions have been attacked and vilified therein. It is written there :—"The Hindus have lost their kingdom on account of idolatry, and have become the slaves of foreigners (English and Muhammadans), just like the potter's ass and hotel-keeper's horse." This shows plainly that Dayanand's object in exposing the evils of idolatry was simply the subversion of British power. Thousands of foolish Hindus are giving up

idolatry and joining the ranks of the Arya Samaj, in the hope of obtaining the government of the country some day. In that very book it is said :—"The slaughter of cows and oxen has commenced with the advent of flesh-eating foreigners in this country." This also shows that the Arya Samajists preached the doctrine of cow protection simply to sow the seeds of sedition and revolt. It is also written in that book that India is becoming impoverished on account of foreign domination and the commerce carried on by foreigners, It is written in the same *Satyarth Prakash* that when mutual discord prevails in a country, it is seized by a foreign ruler. It is also stated there that when brothers quarrel, a foreign ruler interferes and becomes the arbitrator. All this plainly shows that Dayanand tried to unite all the Hindus simply to create a mutiny. In that very *Satyarth Prakash* there is an account of the method of making cannon balls, gunpowder, forts, and Parliament. Dayanand wrote a book called *Aryabhi Binay*, in which the following occurs :—"We will never have a foreign ruler, and we will never submit to foreign domination." Such writings clearly show that he wrote books only to inflame the passions and excite the Hindus to rebellion. An Arya Samajist has printed a book called *Buddhi Prabesh*, and circulated it all over India. It is stated there that any one interfering with the propagation of the Arya religion will be slain, be he a Christian or a Musalman. There is published an organ of the Aryans called *Aryavarth*, which contains several papers against British rule, and such as would cause riots between the Hindus and Muhammadans. It also discusses freely the question of establishing a separate Parliament in India, All these papers and journals are with me, and I can produce them before Government at any time.

At Ajmere the Arya Samajists publish a paper called *Rajasthan*, which contains articles hostile to British rule and such as have infused a spirit of disloyalty in the minds of the Rajput chieftains, who are using their best endeavours to convert their subjects to the tenets of the Arya religion. At the Courts of the Rajas of Rajputana there are several religious devotees, such as

Bhaskaranand, Prakashanand, Achhutanand, &c., who are exciting all the Hindus, including the Rajas, to throw off the British yoke. Mr. Hume is only nominally the head of the Congress, but the chief leaders are the Arya Samajists. For six years I took part in the deliberations of the Congress and found among its members very few persons who were loyal to the British Government or sincere well-wishers of the subjects. Pandit Ajodhia Nath, Kashi Nath Tilang, Feroz Shah Mahta and W. C. Bonerjea are indeed loyal to the core ; but the majority of Congresswalas are rebellious Arya Samajists, who are trying to unite some 20 crores of Hindus into a band for subverting the British power. If Arya Samajis, Gaurakhshini Sabhas, and the Congress are allowed to do their work for a few years more, there would be an end of British rule in India. Gaurakhshini associations can be divided into two classes. The Gaurakhshini Sabha of Nagpore has been organised by Hindus, though it contains two Marwari Arya Samajis. Hindus who worship idols are loyal to the British Government. The Gaurakhshini Associations of Farakhabad, Bombay, Satara, Poona Sholapore, &c., have been established by the Arya Samajis, who are disloyal to Government. Foolish Hindus are under the impression that it is the Arya Samajists who have organised the Congress, and hence the doctrines of Arya Samaj are the best. I have heard in many villages from foolish Hindus that the English are very wicked, as they have been imposing all sorts of taxes on the people. The Arya Samajis also go about from village to village lecturing in the following strain :—"The English have imposed the *chungi* tax upon us and assessed the zamindars heavily. They have taxed salt also, and do not allow the use of arms to us. They have taxed the produce of the forest also and are taking away to England the riches of our country. If we only unite together we could easily drive the English out of the country and establish our own government." Thousands of stupid Hindus are thus deluded by the Arya Samajis and subscribe thousands of rupees towards the support of the Congress movement. Dayanand, the follower of Nana Rao Peshwa, and the originator of the Arya Samaj, is

indeed dead, but the work of that Samaj has now been taken up by the *Parupkarini Sabha* whose members are also very influential men. Men like Mool Raj, Judge in Panjab, Raja Pratab Singh, &c., in Rajputana, and Raja Jaya Krishna C. S. I., and others of Allahabad, are its members. If the British Government can prevail upon these persons to sever their connection with that Sabha I am sure the root of the Arya Samaj would thereby be destroyed, for these men are contributing thousands of rupees towards the funds of the Arya Samaj, and their example leads thousands of foolish Hindus to join that Samaj. Thousands of Kayasths, who are members of the Kayasth conference, are propagating the principles of the Arya Samaj in the Native States. For instance, Murli Manohar, Treasurer of the Nizam of Hyderabad, was a staunch Arya Samaji. Pandit Hari Krishna informed Akbar Jang, Kotwal of the Nizam's State, that the Arya Samajists were disloyal to Government and were concerting measures for the massacre of the English and Muhammadans. The Kotwal accordingly turned all the preachers of the Arya Samaj out of the Nizam's territories. If Government orders the Kayasthas to cut off their connection with the Arya Samaj, that Samaj would be greatly weakened. Thousands of Government servants are to be found in the ranks of the Arya Samaj. In Panjab there are hundreds of pleaders belonging the Arya Samaj. During the vacation of the law courts these pleaders go to villages and collect subscriptions to the amount of *lakhs* of rupees from their clients in the name of the Vedas and the cows. Likewise there are many *patwaris* and *kanungoes* and schoolmasters professing the doctrines of the Arya Samaj. They also collect thousands of rupees in the name of the Vedas and cows and sow the seeds of insurrection. I have heard that Shamji Krishna Barma, who has been lately appointed Dewan of the Nawab of Junagarh in Gujrat, is a staunch Arya Samaji. It is the policy of the Arya Samajis to secretly tell the Muhammadans that both of them are idol-breakers, while the Hindus are idol-worshippers. They should therefore kill the infidel Hindus. They (Arya Samajis) also tell the illiterate Hindus that the Muhammadans are slaughtering cows, and thus laying the axe at the

root of their religion. They should therefore follow the example of Sevaji and destroy the Muhammadans. Hence it is that Hindus and Musalmans fight amongst themselves and kill one another. It was the Arya Samajists who were the indirect cause of the riots at Junagarh, Bombay, Azimgarh, Ballia and other places. Unless the Anglo-Vedic College of Dayanand at Lahore is abolished, the spirit of disloyalty against the British Government will continue to spread in Panjab. The preachers of the Arya Samaj go about from village to village in Panjab, arousing a spirit of sedition in the minds of the Panjabi Sikhs, and collecting thousands of rupees in the name of the Vedas. In the native regiments of the British Army there are many soldiers professing the principles of the Arya Samaj, and unless the military officers turn them out, the whole army will become infected, and there will be a second mutiny some day. A part of the national Congress is the Social Conference, which consists for the most part of Arya Samajis, who are not slow to sow the seeds of disaffection. Arya Samajists are to be found among the editors of Hindu newspapers, and they make people disloyal by means of their seditious writings. As for instance the editors of *Kala Kinkar*, *Bharat Mitra* and other papers are Arya Samajists.

ALA RAM SANYASI

Allahabad, Mutthiganj, Dharmasala of Gokal Das Tejpal

"SARATHI JUBAK MANDALI" GANG

This gang, which has been named for the purpose of reference the *Sarathi Jubak Mandali* gang, is ill-defined and composed of several groups of people having their own chosen leaders. These groups, however, appear to be in constant touch with other groups, thus forming one large gang.

The origin of the present gang may be said to have been the formation of the *Jubak Mandali* in March 1908. This Society

was founded with a view to collect subscriptions for the entertainment of Bepin Chandra Pal on his release from jail, and to form a procession party at the large meeting which was held in Calcutta on his arrival. The actual organisers of the society are said to have been Satish Dutt and Nripendra Roy Choudhuri. Satish Dutt is said to have been a hanger-on at the *Jugantar* office, and with Nripendra Roy, a resident of Jessore, collected round him some thirty or forty youths who became members of the *Mandali*. These youths were, it is surmised, remnants of the body guard of volunteers who used to travel with Leakat Husain, when the latter was working in the mofussil, and who formed a procession party when their leader attended meetings held in Calcutta. We know that two of the most prominent of these volunteers, Jogin Tagore and Jiten Roy, were in close touch with Leakat Husain, and it is said that Jogindra Nath Tagore is, to this day, afraid of being arrested, owing to his close intimacy with Leakat at the time he was prosecuted in Backergunge for disseminating sedition. Other members were probably recruited from the numerous "Volunteer" bodies which were formed at the time of the *Ardhodaya Jog* festival.

The *Jubak Mandali* procession party made themselves very conspicuous at the meeting held to welcome Bepin Chandra Pal, but it was not until after the searches in connection with the Manicktola garden conspiracy that they came prominently to the fore as disciples of the extremist leaders and workers for the cause

In May 1908 a circular leaflet was issued by this society calling upon Bengalis to celebrate the anniversary of Protapaditya, the robber king, who ruled a part of Bengal, now comprised by Jessore, 24-Parganas, Khulna and Nadia, and who is looked upon as the last Bengali national hero, and representative ruler. The president of the Exhibition which was to be held to commemorate the anniversary, was Jotindra Nath Roy Chaudhuri, the zamindar of Taki, a well known agitator, and a person peculiarly fitted to be the president, as he is a direct descendant of Protapaditya, and thus regarded as a national leader of the Bengalis.

The other people whose names are shown on the leaflet as helpers and organisers were—

- (1) Premtosh Bose, the well-known agitator.
- (2) Dakhinaranjan Mazumdar, of Faridpur.
- (3) Jyoti Lal Mukherji, a dismissed Sub-Inspector, who was implicated in the publishing of the *Sonar Bangla* pamphlet, and is now an active agent amongst the Bhowanipur societies.
- (4) Bepin Behari Das.
- (5) Lalit Mohan Ghosal, a well-known agitator.
- (6) Satyendra Nath Roy Chaudhuri, of Pangsa, Faridpur, subsequently the Editor of the *Sarathi*.
- (7) Nripendra Nath Roy Chaudhuri, previously referred to.
- (8) Niranjan Pal, son of Bepin Chandra Pal, now in England. He was a close friend of Ullaskar Dutt.
- (9) Kiron Ch. Mukherji, now undergoing eighteen months' imprisonment for the publication of a seditious book called *Pantha*. This book was printed at the *Jugantar* Press.
- (10) Basudeo Bhattacharji, now in England. He was previously fined in connection with the publication of the *Sonar Bangla*, and has recently made himself conspicuous by assaulting Sir W. Lec-Warner in London.

After the celebration of the festival, certain Bengali youths assaulted the police near Shampukur, and were sent up for trial. The four youths were (1) Panna Lal Chatterji, (2) Radhapado Mazumdar, (3) Surendra Nath Ghose, (4) Indu Bhusan Sen. Nos. 1 and 2 were members of the *Jugantar* party, and nos. 3 and 4 of the *Jubak Mandali*. We thus see that there was a close connection between the *Jugantar* and the youths who were members of the *Jubak mandali*.

From certain information obtained by a police officer who was a member of the *mandali* we have reason to believe that the *mandali* was collecting money for the anarchist party and that its members, or at least its leaders, actually associated themselves with the *Jugantar* party in their exploits, and

amongst their activities was an attempt on Mr. Kingsford, though as a matter of fact it was Mr. Kingsford's brother that they were watching, and the despatch of a dacoity band to Naihati. On the break up of the *Jugantar* after the arrest of Nikhileswar Roy Moulik, the remnants of the party surreptitiously removed the *Jugantar* press from No. 68, Manicktola Street, to No. 28, Shampukur, where a monthly magazine of a virulently seditious kind, called the *Sarathi*, was published. The principal leader at the time was Kartic Dutt, who had already interested himself in the *Jubak Mandali* by paying the fines of the boys sent up in the *Protapaditya* assault case.

The Editor of the *Sarathi* was Satyendra Nath Roy Chaudhuri, and the publisher, Gyanendra Kumar Bose. The first issue of the magazine contained a very seditious article called "Patriotism in the *Gita*" and also a lamentation on the death by drowning of Satish Dutt, the *Jubak Mandali* leader, who was drowned in the Hooghly on his way back from a *mela* at Mahesa. The life of the *Sarathi* was a brief one; the article "Patriotism in the *Gita*" was referred to the Legal Remembrancer for opinion, and was held to be very seditious. Government, however, eventually declined to prosecute owing to the fact that several months would have intervened between the prosecution and date of publication. This delay was due to the publishers sending the magazine to the Bengal Librarian long after it was published, and to dilatoriness on the part of the Bengali Translator. The supporters of the *Sarathi* evidently got wind of the intended prosecution and stopped publication. There is on record in this office an interesting photo showing Satish Dutt laid out on a *khatya* surrounded by several mourners, amongst whom were—

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Mohit Mazumdar a contributor to the <i>Sarathi</i> . | (5) Satyendra Nath Roy Chaudhuri. |
| (2) Sachindra Ray, third brother of Annoda Ray Kabiraj. | (6) Basudeo Bhattacharji. |
| (3) Gyanendra Kumar Bose. | (7) Anil Pal. |
| (4) Anukul Chandra Das Ghosh. | (8) Nirmal Ch. Das Ghose. |
| | (9) Kedar Nath Bhattacharji. |

From the time that No. 28, Shampukur, became a common resort for the members of the *Jubak Mond. li Sarathi* gang, it is difficult to distinguish them from the remnants of the *Jugantar* party. It is very probable that the gang formed an outer circle round an inner circle which was directly controlled by Kartic Dutt. We already know that Kartic Dutt was in close touch with the society, and it is more than probable that he recruited freely from its ranks in order to strengthen his shattered following. We find that Kiron Mukherji and Lalit Ganguli, who were originally members of the *mandali* were absorbed by the *Jugantar* party, and worked directly under Kartic Dutt, who was undoubtedly the presiding genius of the organisation.

From a report sent by the Midnapore Police in September 1908, we learn that a *Jogeswari Math* was founded by two members of this party, Gopal Bhattacharji and Kedar Bhattacharji, near Debra, and from a letter subsequently discovered in February this year, we see that this *math* was founded with the idea of its eventually becoming an *Ananda Math*. This letter, which is full of interest, was written to Gopal Bhattacharji, who is addressed as Bhowani Pathak (the name of the dacoit leader in Bankim Chatterji's book *Debi Choudhurani*), and is signed "Kumarananda Swami," the *Ananda Math* title of Lalit Ganguli. The letter refers to the untimely arrest of Kartic Dutt, and the *maths* in Mymensingh and Khulna.

The arrest of Kartic Dutt deprived the gang of a real leader, and we find that since his departure from their ranks, their work for "the Mother" has been of a spasmodic and ill-organised nature. As far as is definitely known, the following cases were the work of this party :

- (1) A large theft of jewellery, etc., by Anukul and Khogesh Das Ghosh, helped by Broja Lal Banerji, at the instance of Jogin Thakur.—
The first two named were convicted, but Braja Lal got off. The theft was committed in order to supply funds to the organisation.
- (2) Hatigarh outrage. In this case Lalit Ganguli, Anil Pal, Gangadhar Ghatak and Norendra Bose

were concerned. Lalit has been convicted, and Anil and Gangadhar acquitted after a protracted trial. It is strongly suspected that certain members of this gang had a hand in the Netra dacoity case, and from a statement made by Gangadhar Ghatak, whilst under trial at Balasore, it seems that assistance was given to the local people in the *swadeshi* looting case which took place at Bankadah, near Kucheyakole in Bankura. We have received a large amount of information which goes to show that the gang is constantly plotting outrages, but suffers from the lack of a leader of sufficient boldness to encourage them to carry out their designs.

The gang is a heterogeneous one, with several advisers and petty chiefs, and it is very difficult to say exactly how far there is any controlling authority and common policy. From the information we have on record we may divide the gang into four parts—(1) Gurus, (2) Influential supporters, (3) Leaders, (4) Members :

I GURUS

- (1) Tarakhepa *alias* Tarapado Banerji—This mysterious individual, who appears to be a political *Sadhu* of a dangerous type, is believed to be consulted by the members of the gang. He frequents the districts of Birbhum and Nadia, but his actual whereabouts cannot be ascertained. He is believed to be a disciple of an old *Sadhu* called Bamakhepa, of Tarapur in Birbhum.
- (2) Manmatho Nath Mukherji *alias* Thakur, of Chander-nagore.—This man has been reported several times by the Hooghly Police as a very suspicious character, and is said to be head of a band of militant *Sadhus*. He is known to be in touch with this gang through Jogen Thakur, who frequently visits him in Chandernagore.

II INFLUENTIAL SUPPORTERS

- (1) Atindra Nath Bose, of No. 33, Hari Ghose's Lane.—This man is connected with the *Matri Bhandar* the principal resort of the Eastern Bengal members of the Revolutionary party in Calcutta, and has been mentioned by one of the accused in the Alipore case as a staunch-supporter of the movement.
- (2) Bhupati Bose, of No. 30, Mirzaffer's Lane—This man works in a Calcutta office in European piecegoods, and was a disciple of K. K Mitter and a friend of Leakat Husain. We have evidence to show that he was a patron of Kartic Dutt, and that many members of the gang used to frequent, and still frequent, his house.

II LEADERS

- (1) Nripendra Roy Chaudhuri—His identity is uncertain ; he may possibly be the son of Dr. L. M. Roy, of Dacca.
- (2) Satyendra Roy Chaudhuri, formerly of the *Sarathi*.—A resident of Pangsa, Faridpur.
- (3) Gyanendra Kumar Bose, resides at No, 171, Cornwallis Street—Former publisher of *Sarathi*.
- (4) Jogen Thakur, of No. 126 6-1, Manicktolla Street.—Former member of Leakat Husain's party.
- (5) Jiten Roy, of No. 77·2, Muktaram Babu's Street—Former member of Kartic Dutt's gang, mentioned by Panna Lal Chatterji in his statement.
- (6) Prosanna Kumar Roy, of No. 74, Sukea Street—Secretary to *Jubak Sammilani*, an emasculated successor to the *mandali*.
- (7) Labanga Kanta Sircar, a Dacca man—Former member of Kartic Dutt's gang, mentioned by Panna Lal Chatterji in his confession.
- (8) Gopal Bhattacharji, of Baidran, 24-Parganas, and No. 36-1, Fulbagan, or Raja Nava Krishna's 2nd Lane.

IV MEMBERS

- (1) Jotin Bhattacharji, brother of above.
- (2) Kedar Roy *alias* Bhattacharji *alias* Khara, of Baidran, 24-Parganas.
- (3) Biswa Nath Ghosh *alias* Bisweswar, of No. 4-1, Beadon Street.
- (4) Kristo Kishore Ghose, cousin of No. 3.
- (5) Khogesh Das Ghosh, of Bistupur, Rajhat, 24-Parganas, and no. 59-1, Kali Prosad Dutt's Lane.
- (6) Bankim Ch. Das Ghosh, brother of No. 5.
- (7) Nirmal Ch. Das Ghosh, brother of No. 5.
- (8) Anath Nath Das Ghosh, brother of No. 5.
- (9) Anukul Ch. Das Ghosh, brother of No. 5.
- (10) Anil Pal, of No. 19, Ram Mohan Shaha's Lane.
- (11) Surendra Nath Das, of No. 8, Radha Madhab Gossain's Lane.
- (12) Jotin Sircar, of No. 35-1, Boloram Sircar's Street.
- (13) Sarat Ch. Ghose, of No. 29, Boloram Sircar's Street.
- (14) Brojo Lal Banerji, of No. 68-1, Russa Road.
- (15) Indu Bhusan Ghose, of Telengi Bagan, Ultadingi.
- (16) Ashutosh Das Gupta, of No. 4, Shampukur, temporary member, formerly member of Pulin Das's *Anusilan Samiti* at Dacca, now a much wanted absconder. Possibly the same as Ashutosh Sen, reported to be at Chandernagore by one informer, and to be going about with Suren Ghose by another.
- (17) Basudeo Bhattacharji, now in England.
- (18) Surendra Nath Mukherji *alias* Chakravarti, of Behala, 24-Parganas suspected in Raita case.
- (19) Mohit Mazumdar, of Hedua, Beadon Street.
- (20) Gangadhar Ghatak, of No. 161, Upper Circular Road.
- (21) Norendra Nath Bose, of Telipara, a friend of Lalit Ganguli.
- (22) Gyanendra Nath Mitter, a close friend of Gyan Bose and also of Sorojini Ghose. He is related to K. K. Mitter and visits No. 6, College Square.

- (23) Khogendra Nath Banerji, of No. 173, Cornwallis Street.
- (24) Jyotish Mukherji, of No. 4-1, Durga Das Mukherji's Street.
- (25) Nogendra Nath Ghose, the printer of the *Nayak*.
- (26) Indu Bhusan Sen, of Ratan Sircar's Garden Lane.
- (27) Tarapado Roy, of No. 36, Mirzaffer's Lane.
- (28) Surendra Nath Ghose, of Taki, 24-Parganas, and some time of 28, Shampukur. This man's identity has not yet been properly fixed.

The above named persons are not an exhaustive list of the members of this gang, but they form a list showing those members whom we believe to be active and to be likely, under good leadership, to form a very dangerous organisation. The address and proper name of each person has been verified, with the exception of two members, against whose names there are notes to that effect. The work of verification has been difficult, owing to the fact that nearly every member has an *alias* and that each member of the *mandali* used to have a separate *samiti* name.

The 21st July 1909.

G. C DENHAM.

The deposition of Lalit Mohan Chakravarti, aged about 20 years, taken on solemn affirmation under the provisions of Act X of 1875, before me, H. P. Duval, Magistrate of the first-class, Howrah, this 23rd day of March 1910.

My name is Lalit Mohan Chakravarti. My father's name is Prio Nath Chakravarti, I am by caste Brahmin. My home is at mauza Netra, police-station Diamond Harbour, zilla 24-Parganas. I reside at present in Fort William, Police-station zilla, where I am detained in the custody of Sati Prosad Ganguli, Sub-Deputy Magistrate, who is sitting here. (After this was said Babu Sati Prosad Ganguli withdrew from the Court.) I made a confession before the Deputy Magistrate of Diamond Harbour in reference to the Netra dacoity. The Deputy Magistrate is

the Subdivisional Officer. His name is, I believe, Charu Chandra Chatterji. That confession was true in every particular, nor did I conceal anything. I remember, too, that I accompanied two *hakims* from place to place to point out places and particulars in confirmation of my confession to the Subdivisional Officer, Diamond Harbour. I think this was at the end of last December. I was with the *hakims* showing places about $1\frac{1}{2}$ months, including times when I did not go out. I was out with Sati Babu about 20 days. Then volunteers : It was, I think from November that I went about with the *first hakim*, whose name was N. Sen, whom I can identify if I see him. Whatever I told these two *hakims* and whatever I showed them was correct.

I understand why I have been offered a pardon by the Magistrate trying this case ; because I have promised and undertaken to disclose the truth and will conceal nothing.

I am a-Brahmin. My father is alive, I suppose he is at Netra, where he has his residence. He married twice. I am a son by his first wife, who is dead. After her death he married again. My maternal uncle Sarat Ch. Chakravarti, is alive. My real surname is Nundi, a Boidik Brahmin, and we are called Chakravarti as a title only. My uncle lives at Sibganj in Howrah district. My maternal grandfather, Moti Lal Chakravarti, is alive. I have two other maternal uncles—one Bejoy Kumar Chakravarti and Lalu (a little boy about four years old). They all live at Sibganj. I am unmarried. My father tried to get me married and I, having become a member of the secret society, did not go home, and declined to get married. Before two years I used to go to my uncle's home for two or three days at a time regularly. In the last two years I have only been there once for a couple of days, in *Magh* or *Falgun* 1908. I know a certain amount of English, and have passed the Entrance Examination from the Diamond Harbour School in 1905.

When I was still at school, there is a village near our village called Panchagram. To the house of Bhuban Chandra Babboton (he is a *ganti* of Benoy Kristo Deb, Raja Bahadur) Sachidananda Swami came. I heard a very learned men and a Brahmachari had come there ; so I went to see him. I made his ac-

quaintance and frequently went there. He was there about 15 days. He talked to me, instructing me in religious and secular matter. I think this was in the year of 1902.

the Coronation, before the Coronation actually took place. Sachidananda lived at Brindaban.

Where he lives now I can't say. I used to know his address, but have forgotten it. The Swami gave me religious books to read, and reading these books and receiving instructions from him. I began to be disinclined to have anything to do with the affairs of the world. The Swami knew English. He told me he was an M. A. His original name was Umesh Chandra Banerji. When he became a *sanyasi* he adopted the name of Gopabala Sachidanandi Swami, and he wore ornaments like a woman. After passing the Entrance I did not try to get work, nor did I go on studying. I sat idly at home. My father then sent me to Calcutta to learn shorthand and typing. While I was sitting idly at home, I used to write to the Swami, and he wrote to me. He taught me such things as that the world is unreal and nothing. I came to Calcutta in 1906—October. I went to reside at the mess at 46, Mechua Bazar Street—it was in the house of one Mitra, who lived next door. I first Joined the Bow Bazar Fonetik school, I don't remember who was the proprietor. I did not attend regularly. I was there two or three months and then I gave it up. My father's elder brother's sons lived in the mess. People from our neighbourhood used to live in the mess. Hem Chandra Sen was there, and so were his two brothers. I knew Hem Chandra from before. He was my father's disciple. Hem was at the mess when I arrived. I knew from before that he had dedicated his life to the improvement of the country. His age is about 25. His parents used to cry that he never came home, and there was a rumour that he had dedicated his life for the improvement of the country. But at that time I did not know how he had done it. After I joined the mess and so became intimate with Hem Sen, I came to know how he meant to improve the condition of the country. He began to give me instructions how to achieve independence for the country. He said, may be it will take a 100 or 200 years, we must begin

collecting arms and have in every district four or five men members of a society. He did not then say what society. I asked whether his society was like the Anti-Circular Society or some other public bodies ; but he said it was not that sort of society. I had my discussions arguments with him, and so got to understand what sort of society he meant. I knew Probash Ch. Deb. A little after I had come to the mess at Mechua Bazar Street, I was introduced to him by Hem Sen. There are two Probash Ch. Deb's. This one lived at 52, Mechua Bazar Street, in his own house. The other Probash Ch. Deb lives in Bow Bazar. I know the house, but I do not remember the gali in which the house is. He is an M.A.

Probash (of Mechua Bazar) used to lecture in College Square, and he took me there to hear him. About that time the two parties, 'extremist' and "moderate," came into existence. He lectured for the extremists. I can't remember what he said. The purport of his lectures was that the country will not be improved by commerce and industry, and that physical strength was necessary for the purpose of gaining the country's independence I wanted to improve my health by use of *lathi* sword and dagger, and I told him so. He took me to the *Atmonmati Samiti* in a school in Bow Bazar. That school was the branch of a High school in Mechua Bazar. There I practised these actions with *lathi*, etc. This school was in a blind lane, by the side of which is a large yellow house. The school had a frontage in Bow Bazar, but the ground where we exercised was at the back down the blind lane. [*Volanteers*]: I think the name of the school was Khelat Chandra Institution. Afterwards we had our exercises at the Bengal National College, after it was removed to near the Railway Police Office in Bow-Bazar.

All these exercises I met Bepin Chandra Ganguli, Durga Charan Banerji, Indro Nath Nandi, son of Colonel S. C. Nandi, Harish Chandra Sikdar, Kali Kumar Rai, Satish Ch. Mukherji, Chuni Lal Nandi, Lalit Mohan Palit, Asutosh Chatterji, Susil Kumar Sen, Birendra Kumar Sen, and others. Probash Deb, M A., was the Secretary of this *samiti*.

Probash De, of Mechua Bazar, one day said to me—"You must go and work under Indra Nandi. Take this letter and go to him." He said this as he then knew my mind. I took the letter to 37, College Street, to Indra Nandi.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.
23-3-10.

READ over the witness in English, and Bengali, when he did not understand English and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.
23-3-10

THIS was read over to me, explained and admitted the deposition to be correct.

(Sd.) LALIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI

(He wrote the above lines in English and explained them in Bengali.)

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.
23-3-10

RECALLED ON 24TH MARCH 1910

On solemn affirmation—At that time he gave me the letter. I was staying at 66, Nebutola Lane. The Calcutta High School is located there. My cousins lived in the third floor, and the school was in the two lower floors; and I lived with them. I had gone there five or seven days before Probash gave me the letter to Indra Nandi. On giving the letter to Indra, he told me to take my things and go and live at 15-1 or 15-2, Bhawani Charan Dutt's Lane where the *Jugantar* and the *Chatra Bhandar* mess was, and I went (October) there. This was the end of *Aswin* 1906. Indra took me there on the same day as I removed to this mess and initiated (in English) me. I went to the mess

in the morning, and at 11 A.M. Indra Nandi initiated me before meal-time. It is the custom for the initiation ceremony to take place before meal-time. Jotin Mitter and Lal Behari Rai lived in the mess, and they took me there.

On entering the house they two went away, and Indra Nandi took me alone to the third floor of his house. The house is Indra Nandi's and he lived there quite alone. In that room was a steel trunk, very large, a bedstead (*khat*) of English fashion, not a *tuktaposh*. There was a table and some chairs (I don't remember how many). There was a stone figure of Sivaji. It was on the east side. The deep part of the house is east to west. Sivaji was on a small platform standing in a recess in the wall. There were two swords (English word) placed crossed just above the figure and the recess on the wall. There was a printed copy of *Chandi*.

After that he made me wear a silk cloth ; he had been wearing one. He gave it to me. He had it in the room from before. He was then wearing an *endi-chadar*. He gave me no *chadar* and he made me take off my shirt and I was bare in the upper part of my body. He and I then sat on two small pieces of carpet (*ashan*) in front of the image. Before we sat down, a maidservant came to the verandah outside the room and called Indra, who went out and brought back some flowers in a loaf and a *pitol lota*. The door was then shut. Indra gave flowers and water, and I could hear what he said as he did Puja. He spoke very softly the prayers to himself, and I did not hear. The puja lasted two or three minutes. He then opened the trunk and produced a sword and a book (*khata*) bound in English fashion and a candle (English word) and a copper plate, small size (shows about two inches by three inches). He also brought out a small ink pot with blue-black ink, the sort sold for two pice, and a pen with a white holder like ivory and with a steel nib. He tore out a leaf from the *khata* and he began to speak and told me to write at his dictation the ten vows. He read them from the same *khata* book. I then wrote them down. The paper was burnt afterwards according to the rules, but I remember the vows. They were :

- (1) *Ami adhya hoite e somprodai bukto hoilam. Joto din na desh sadhin hoebe toto din e somprodai bukto thakibo o desher karyya karibo.*
- (2) *Ami kono durovisandhi loiya, ba kono kṛabhipraye e somprodai bukto hoitecche na.*
- (3) *Ami e somprodair protyek saubhroka brahti bade dekhibo. Jodi kokono kaharo sahit monobichhat hoi, taha hoile sharal chitte metiabo.*
- (4) *Ami netar bina adeshe kono karyya karibo na. Tini jaha adesh kariben taha alonganio gyane o bina bakya-byaya palon karibo.*
- (5) *Ami e somprodair kono gopaniya bishoi janite chhesta karibo na, abon jodi goponyo bishoi kargya modya thakiya janite pare taha kahakaho emon ki kono sabhya kio bolibo na.*
- (6) *Jadi ami soicchae e somprodai kono ahitakar karjya kare, ba netar adesh longan kori, taha hoilo netar adesh moto ja kaho subha amar prandando dite pariban, taha jonya bhagabanar nikot dayee haiban na.*
- (7) *Ami joto din ei somprodair bukto thakibo, toto din bibaher dwara sansarar kargye byasta thakibo na.*
- (8) *Ami sorboda dharme mote rakhya satya pote chholibo o brahmachargya paloner chesta koribo.*
- (9) *Ami tamar tulshi ganga jol, gita agni talwar sporshya kariya o bhagabanke sakhya karya ei brota britihoilam.*
- (10) *Ami jadi kokono o e doshti protigya langan kari taha hoile prithri purushganer norake goman matri hotya o matri raktopane pape papi hoibo.*

THE witness wrote out in the vernacular these ten vows and then repeated them to me. I attach the paper written by him in my presence.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.

1. I become a member of this society from to-day. So long as the country will not become independent, I shall continue to be a member of this society and shall serve the country.

2. It is not with any bad motive or any evil purpose that I am becoming a member of this society.
3. Every member of this society will be as a brother to me. If ever any alienation of feelings occurs between myself and any one, I shall remove it with an open heart.
4. I shall not do any work without the leader's order. Whatever he will order I shall obey unhesitatingly, considering it to be untransgressable.
5. I shall never try to become acquainted with the secrets of this society and, if in the course of any work I happen to become acquainted with any secret, I shall not divulge it to anybody, not even to any member.
6. If of my own will I do anything harmful to the society or transgress the leader's order, then any member, under orders from the leader, will be competent to punish me with death, and for that he will not be accountable to God.
7. So long as I shall continue to be a member of this society, I shall not involve myself in the affairs of the world by marriage.
8. I shall always keep my mind steady in righteousness and walk the path of truth and shall try to live a life of celibacy.
9. I take this vow touching copper, *tulsi* (leaves of a scored plant of this name), Ganges water, *Gita*, fire and sword, and calling God to be witness.
10. If ever I violate any of these ten oaths, I shall be guilty of the sin of sending forefathers to hell, of matricide, and of drinking mother's blood.

WRITTEN in my presence. In the eleventh line, the last line, and the one last but four lines are erasures which I initial.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.

(Sd.) LOLIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI

24-3-10

Translated by me.

(Sd.) JNANENDRA LAL MOZUMDAR

2nd Assistant to the Bengali Translator to Govt.

AFTER writing, the paper was burnt. I had written it sitting on the *ashan* in front of the image of Sivaji. The paper was burnt with a match. He then placed in my hand a copper-plate, a tulsi leaf, Ganges water in the *lota*, the candle, the *Gita* and the sword in my hands held, out as I was seated on the *ashan* and my hands were on my knees. He then looking at the *khata*, repeated the ten vows, and I repeated after him. This concluded the ceremony, and as it was then late I came away. The candle had been lighted and was fixed to the copper-plate by its own grease. I remember the ten vows as in after years I myself initiated many *chogras*. When I initiated them, there was not the *puja* of Sivaji. When the people were arrested in the Manikatala garden, of the two boxes of Indra N. Nandi—one was taken to Taranath Rai Chowdhuri's house at No. 4, Raja's Lane and the other was taken first to the *Chhatra Bhandar* shop, No. 4-1, College Square, and thence it was taken to the house of Nani Gopal Gupta at Sibpur. I got the copy-book containing the vows from the box not then, but at the end of 1908.

Explains further—The box which I have spoken of as being in the third floor was taken to the Ballyganj Garden House of Colonel Nandi. After the Maniktala garden case we brought it on the top of a *ticca ghari* from there. The *garwan* said it was very heavy, and asked whether it contained money. We took it back to Indra's house. So when it was proposed to remove the box elsewhere in case anyone should say such again, we divided its contents into two boxes—one of these was my property, and that was the one finally taken to Nani Lal Gupta's house at Sibpur.

After initiation I returned to the mess. Indra Nandi said nothing then about the leaders of the society. On the same day in the evening, wrapped up in a *Statesman*, something very heavy was brought by Indra to me at the mess where I lived.

He told me to take it to No. 72, Sukea's Street, to Sakharam Ganesh Deoskar. When I arrived there, he opened the parcel in my presence, and in it was a bull-dog 6-chambered revolver. I had no conversation with him and came away. I had known him before, but not his address. I did not ask anything owing to the rules of the society. Four or five days after my initiation, it was a Sunday, Indra told me that money is taken from No. 7, Alipur Lane, in the direction of Metiabruz. He told me to find out how it is taken, how many people accompany it, and by what road it goes. I was to follow it and watch. He told me this on Saturday night. I went down on Sunday before 6 A.M. by tram from College Street, changing at Esplanade and going by the Alipore tram, got out at the Maharaja's House. *Corrects*: No, I walked to Alipore from Esplanade, going up and down the Kidderpore Road. I began walking up and down in front of No. 7, Alipore Lane. I saw it was a European's house. I saw the money taken. A man took it on a bicycle in a leather bag. I can't say if it was money. The bag fitted in the frame. I first followed on foot as fast I could. At Kidderpore I got a *ghari* and pursued him up to the bridge of the Dock where I lost sight of him. So I came away, coming back by the Kidderpore tram and by the Shambazar tram to Indra Nath Nandi's house in College Street. I saw him and told him all that occurred and then returned to the mess, arriving about 9.30. Indra said nothing more to me.

I came to know about the organization of the society after I had left Indra's house and come to live at Sarat Ch. Mitter Doctor's house at No. 86-1, Diamond Harbour Road, in the end of 1908. I found the heads of the society were nine people, and under them were three. Of the nine heads, I know the names of two. Sahan Swami *alias* Shama Kanta Banerji or Mukherji. I was told so by Satis Sarkar, of Nattore. I do not know him or have seen Sahan Swami; but I know letters, parcels, etc., were sent to him from Sarat's house. Revolvers were also sent to him. I have seen them being packed up. Sahan, I believe, lived on a hill in the direction of Patna. The revolvers used to be sent in eatables—on one occasion a tin of date-

ghur contained a revolver,—by rail as a parcel. I do not remember the address. It was something—*pahar*. The swami has written a book called *Svohang Gita*, and some book on Brahmacharyya. In one of these books there is a picture of his fighting with a tiger, and below it is written that he had fought with the tiger. The other name I came to know was Jiten Banerji or Mukhrji *Sanyasi*. I saw him at the office of the *Sandhya* and at Annada Kaviraj's house in College Street. I don't know the number. When I was living at Indra's house I used to take the revolvers, cartridges, letters to Annada Kaviraj's house, and from then I know. I used to take revolvers and cartridges to Nikileswar Rai Mullik, Kiron Mukerji and Kartic Dutta, who lived in that house. So I came to know Jatin, and he gave me instruction as to the secret society, saying what should be done. I knew Jiten Mukerji in 1908. On the two occasions when I went to commit dacoities, watchwords were selected. Those who worked under the leaders gave us the watchwords. Nani Gopal Gupta, of Sibpur, on both occasions gave me the watchword. In Netra dacoity the watchword was Tara repeated three times, so that we could know one another, and at Mosat (Howrah-Amta Railway), where we went to commit dacoity, *Haribole* repeated three times was the watchword. The dacoity did not take place.

The three people under the nine are Rajat Rai *alias* R.N. Rai, Barrister, P. Mitter, Barrister, and Arabindo Ghose who was in the bomb case. When I was at Indra's house, I saw these three meeting. I did not know then they were under the nine people : that I got to know when I was at Sarat Mitter's, as I heard people saying so. When I was in Indra's house I used to take letters to Rajat Rai and Arabindo Ghose. I took one letter to Rajat to the High Court upstairs and another to him near a church on the way to Bhowanipur. On that night I had to wait for him, and he came and took the letter from me. When I was at Darjeeling in the Sanitarium in *Sraban* 1901 I also saw him. He came to see me, and I came to know him well. I also went to his house, which is just by the Maharaja of Burdwan's house, Rose Bank.

I also took letters to Arabindo Ghose, once to Scott's Lane, also to College Square at Kristo Kumar Mitter's house, and to him at Subodh Mullick's house in Wellington Square. The main object of the secret society was to make the country independent. We were to collect for its attainment men, arms and money. There were three departments, and these three persons had a separate department. Who had charge of which I do not know.

Under these three were some people e.g., Nani Gopal Gupta and others who used to carry out their orders. Such were Nani Gopal Gupta of Sibpur, Jotin Dada *alias* Mukerji, who lived in the direction of Kristanagar and who works in the Writers Buildings—at what work I don't know. I know many of them. Amaresh Kanjilal is another. His home is in Jessore.

(Sd.) LALIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.

24-3-10.

READ over in English in my presence to the witness and admitted to be correct. Portions not understood in English explained in Bengali.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.

RECALLED, 26TH MARCH 1911

BESIDES these there is Satis Sirkar, of Nichu Bazar, Nattore. *Witness volunteers*: I made an omission on the last day of hearing. When I was at Darjeeling, Bidhubhusan Biswas, of Beliasishi, district Nadia, wrote a letter about the Haludbari dacoity to Sirish Sirkar who was staying with me for a little time at the Sanitarium. I then went with the letter to Rajat Rai's house. Amarash Bhattacharji went with me. He was not a member of the secret society. I did not know what was in the letter. I afterwards got to know its contents from a letter which Bejoy Chakravarti wrote to me. Rajat Rai, when I took the letter gave ten (10) rupee notes, and he wrote on a piece of paper to Sirish that no more money than this was to be spent in the dacoity. I gave the note and money to Sirish, and on that Sirish left Derjeeling. I saw Rajat Rai in his dining room. Amresh Bhattacharji was sitting on a chair by the entrance

There was Surendra N. Chakravarti of Berhampur, Murshidabad.

Indra Nandi used to collect arms for Calcutta and with him was Sishir Kumar Ghose.

Nani Gopal had charge of the 24-Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly.

Jotin Dada had charge of Rajshahi, Nadia, Jessore and Khulna.

Amaresh Kanjilal had charge of Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Jamalpur and Cooch Behar.

Satis Sirkar was under Jotin Dada for Nattore and Dighapatya, Amalpur in Nadia.

Suren Chakravarti had charge of Berhampur, Murshidabad.

Their charge was to collect arms, men and money for the freeing of the country.

I know the names of 200 or 250 men of the secret society. With them I had done work. I remember the names —

At Karanjali, 24-Parganas — Kumar Krista Bose.

At Netra — Hem Chandra Sen.

At Jaynagar, Muzilpur — Chuni Lal Nandi, Tinkori Das, Rajanikanta Bhattacharji, Satya Bhattacharji, and Indu Kiran Bhattacharji.

At Baruipur — Harendra Nath Pathak.

At Champahati, Kalikapur, 24-Parganas — Harendra Nath Banerjee, Hari Charan Banerjee, Satis Chandra Chakravarti and Baroda Chandra Chakravarti.

At Chingripota — Bhusan Chandra Mitra, Norendra Nath Bhattacharji, Noni Gopal Bhattacharji and Rakhal Das Bhattacharji.

At Baikantapur — Sarat Chandra Ghosh.

At Barrackpur — Jotindra Nath De and Kumaresh Sirkar.

At Chetla — Charu Chandra Ghosh, Behari Lal Ghosh (milkman), Jotindra Nath Biswas, Kiron Chandra Rai, Bhudi (nephew of Charu Chandra Ghosh, mentioned above);

I do not know his real name.

At Kidderpore — Bimola Charan Deb, Manik Lal Karmokar, Panna Lal De, Rakhal Chandra Das, Banomali

Karmokar, Ashutosh Ghose, Debendra Nath Sirkar, Dr. Sarat Chandra Mitter, Suresh Chandra Mitter, Satis Chandra Mitter.

In Calcutta—Lalit Mohan Palit of Dharmatala Street ; Raghunath Banerjee of Wellington Lane ; Dr. Anukul Biswas, of Nebutola Lane ; Ashutosh Chakravarti, of St. James's Square ; Harish Chandra Sikdar, of Amherst Street ; Moni Brahmin (I don't know his full name), of Amherst Street ; Kali Rai, of Champatala Lane ; Provash Candra Deb, M.A., of Bowbazar ; Bepin Chandra Ganguli, of Sakarapara Lane, Bowbazar ; Durga Charan Banerji, of Madan Baral's Lane ; Harish Chandra Mukherji, of Madan Baral's Lane ; Satis Chandra Mukherji, of Madan Baral's Lane ; Manik Brahmachari, of Madan Baral's Lane ; Ashesh Kumar Banerji, of Mallanga Lane ; Indra Nath Nandi, of College Street ; Narendra Nath Bose, of Mirzapur Street ; Pabitra Charan Datta, of the *Chatra Bhandar*, living in Champatala 1st Lane ; Nogendra Nath Halder, of the *Chatra Bhandar* (I do not know his address) ; Akhoy Kumar Bhattacharji, of the *Cha'ra Bhandar* (his house is in Burdwan district) ; Narain Chandra Mukherji, of the *Chatra Bhandar*, house at Janai, Hooghly district ; Sukumar Mitra, of College Square ; Hari Das Chakravarti, of Sitaram Ghose's Street, Purna Chandra Chakravarti, of Sitaram Ghosh's Street ; Abinash Chandra Chakravarti (a Munsif), of Sitaram Ghose's Street ; Probash Chandra De, of Mechua Bazar ; Birendra Nath Banerji, of Bechu Chatterji's Street (he worked in the *Sandhya* office) ; Nalini Kanta Deb, living in front of Kalibari, Thanthania ; Jitendra Nath Rai, of Muktarām Babu's Street (he lived in the house of Khirod Prosad Sen, Kaviraj) ; Suren (I don't know his whole name ; he lived in Khirod Kaviraj's house) ; Prosanta Kumar Mitter, of Sukea's Street ; Probash Chandra Mittra, of Sukea's Street ; Sakharam Ganes Deoskar, of Sukea's Street ; Annada Kaviraj, of Cornwallis Street ; Kiron Chandra Mukerji, of Cornwallis Street ; Sris Chandra Chakravarti, of Sikdarbagan : Panna Lal Chakravarti of Sikdar Bagan ; Jotish Chandra Mukharji, of Durga Charan Muker-

ji's Lane, Grey Street ; Susil K. Bose, of Ramdhan Mitters' Lane ; Santi Ghose, of Keranibagan Lane and Ramdhan Mitter's Lane ; Satis Chandra Bose, of Cornwallis Street ; Atul Babu, of Cornwallis Street, in the 'mess of the *Anusilan Samiti* ; Jotin Dada *alias* Mukerji, living at Shambazar Street ; Kartik Chandra Dutt, who often lived at the *Jugantar* office ; Ramesh Chandra Seal, who often lived at the *Jugantar* office.

These I knew in Calcutta.

In Howrah district at Sibpur—Noni Gopal Gupta (he was my head and I worked under him) ; Narendra Nath Chatterji ; Bistopada Chatterji and another Bistopada, who was either Chatterji or Mukerji ; Bhotan Babu, Bhaban Babu, both of whom (they are two brothers) are, I think, Mukerjis ; Ashutosh Banerji, and Upendra Nath Bhattacharji.

At Santragachi—Kalipada Chakravarti and Upendra Nath Deb.

In Hooghly district—Behari Lal *alias* Lal Behari Rai, of Nandanpur, near Khanakul, Krishnagar ; Narain Das, of Khanakul, Krishnagar (I don't know his full name ; he is a Brahmin) ; Kishori Lal Gupta, of Khanakul, Krishnagar.

In Nadia district at Krishnagar—Paran *alias* Suresh Chandra Mazumdar ; Karu Da *alias* Nibaran Chandra Mazumdar. There is a pleader too. at Krishnagar, whose name I don't know, but whom I can identify if I see. I have lived in his house. Nibaran Mazumdar works under him as a clerk, I don't know the name of the mahalla. I showed his house to the verifying officer. Haradhan Banerji, whose home is at Sibpur, but he stays at Krishnagar at the Arya Chemical Factory and works under Government in some office. Manmatha Nath Biswas, who is the youngest child of the Bhola-danga zamindar. Suresh Mitter or Mazumdar, Manager of the Arya Chemical Factory.

At Baliasishi—Bidhu Bhusan Biswas, Susil Kumar Biswas, Sarat Chandra Pramanik, Purna Chandra Biswas, and Ananta Kumar Biswas, who is also called Purna Biswas ; Monmatha Biswas, who belongs to the district of Nadia. His village I do not know. He stays at Rajshahi town.

- In Rajshahi district—Bidhu Bhusan Sirkar and Satis Chandra Sirkar, his brother ; Indu Madhab, a pleader (I don't know the rest of his name) ; Jitendra Nath Bose, Jogendra Nath Kaviraj, Promatha Nath Kaviraj, Srish Chandra Sirkar, Haro Govinda Sirkar, Surendra Nath Sirkar, Radha Charan Chakravarti and Satis Chandra Sanyal— all of Nattore.
- At Dighapatia—Bejoy Kumar Chakravarti and Mohini Goswami.
- In Dinajpur—Nalini Kanta Bose, of Babubari, in Dinajpur town. He is the son of Rajani Kanta Bose, a pleader.
- In Mymensingh—Srish Ch. De, son of Adoitya K. De, a Judge living in the town of Mymensingh.
- In Dacca—Lokhendra Nath Gupta, living at Satgaon in that district, post-office Amdia ; Nikileswar Rai Moulik (he stays in Calcutta in various houses—I have seen him at the *Jugantar* office and at Ananda Kaviraj's house) ; Harendra Nath Banerji, of Bikrampur ; Pulin Behari Das, of Dacca town, the second son of Sarat Gupta, a pleader, of Lakhibazar, Dacca town. I know also Ban Behari Das, who is a *bhai* or near relative of Pulin. I do not know any nephew. I can't say if he is a member of the society or not.
- In Faridpur—Jotish Chandra Mitra—I was with him at Indra Nandi's garden and house and at the *Chatra Bhandar* mess. I don't know his village. Rukini Rai—I saw him at *Jugantar* office and lived with him in the *Chatra Bhandar* mess.
- In Midnapore—Prokash Chandra Maiti—I don't know his village. He was at Indra Nandi's house and the *Chatra Bhandar*.
- I had forgotten some Calcutta names. They are Taranath Rai Chaudhuri, of Raja's Lane, and Sailendra Nath Das, of Jhamapukur.
- In Midnapore, too, are—
- Hem Chandra Das—I saw him at Sovabazar in a house in Naba Krista Deb's Street.
- Behari Lal Rai, of Midnapore—I was with him at Indra Nandi's house. I do not know his village.

Bibhuti Rai, of Midnapore—I was with him at Indra Nandi's house.

Ganesh Ch. Das, of Tamluk.

In Calcutta, too, I know—

Sarat Chandra Khan, pleader of the High Court, Goabagan Street.

Boidya Nath Banerji, living in Sarat Khan's house in the same Street.

Ulasker Dutta.

Susil Kumar Sen.

Birendra Kumar Sen.

Barindra Kumar Ghosh.

Arabinda Ghose.

Subodh Kumar *alias* Chandra Mullik.

Jitendra N. Banerji, whom I spoke of above as a *sanyasi*.

Sham Sunder Chakravarti.

I met them often in Scott's Lane, where Arabindo lived ; also in the *Chatra Bhandar* mess and in Indra Nandi's house.

There too is Sudhir Kumar Sen, whom I met too.

I forgot two names of Faridpur—Bijoy Kumar Nag and Sushil Kumar Ghose.

In Basirhat—I know Nitya Gopal Chatterji, of Basirhat (adds, on being read over. Abinash Chandra Bhattacharji).

There are two more from Dacca—Shankar *Dada* (I do not know his full name. He stayed in Chitpur Road in a hired house, and I have seen him in the house of Indra Nandi and in that of Probash Deb, of Mechua Bazar, and at the *Jugantar* office) and Labanga, a nickname. I do not know his full name. He lived in Annada Kaviraj's house in Cornwallis Street.

I know, too, R. N. Rai, *i.e.*, Rajat Rai, and P. Mittra, Shahan Swami *alias* Shyam Kanta Banerji or Mukerji.

[At this stage witness asks for the names to be read out to him. The evidence was read over to him by me, and he adds] :

I omitted Sailendra Nath Bose, of the *Jugantar* office ; Basanta Kumar Bhattacharji, of Nangalberia, 24-Parganas—he

has a house in Calcutta at Badur Bagan ; Bhupendra Nath Datta, of the Jugantar office.

I know of Benares

Tarak Nath Bose,
Surendra N. Chatterji,
Bhusan Ch. Bhattacharji, of Harar Bagh, Benares.
Haripada De.
Bhusan Ch. De.
Annada Ch. Bhattacharji

Atul Chandra Chatterji, of Sonapura, Benares.

Devendra Nath Bhattachrji, of Kedar Ghat, Benares.

Suronath Bhaduri (I saw him at Kedar Ghat. He lives at Benares).

Surendra Nath Chakravarti, of Gonesh Mahalla, Benares.

I also remember at Calcutta Surendra Nath Chakravarti, of *Jugantar* and *Chatra Bhandar* mess.

I think I have already mentioned Sourindra Nath Chakravarti *alias* Haridas Chakravarti, of Sitaram Ghose's Street.

I also remember Chunai Havildar of the 10th Jats, and Surjan Singh of the 10th Jats.

I remember no further names.

I know the pleader of Krishnagar to be a member of the secret society, as he came to Nani Gopal's house at Sibpur, where I have seen him talking secretly with Nani. I also heard he was a member of the society from Nibaran, his clerk, and Haradhan Banerji, who lived in the Chemical Factory. I never talked to him myself.

I have met these people at several places in connection with the work of the society at the house of Probash Ch. De, of Mechua Bazar Street. There I have seen Sirish Chandra Chakravarti (Then volunteers) :—I omitted two names in the jessore district—Amaresh Kanjilal and Rabindra Nath Deb Rai ; in Burdwan district I omitted the name of Dharendra K. Mitra.

At Probash's house in Mechua Bazar I met often—

Sirish Chandra Chakravarti	Sankar Dada.
Rabindra Nath Deb Rai.	Jiten Rai.
Jyotish Ch. Mukerji.	Probash Ch. Deb, M.A.

At the *Atmonnati Samiti* I met often—

Lalit Mohan Palit.	Durga Charan Banerji.
Probash Chandra Deb, M.A.	Harish Mukerji.
Moni Brahmin.	Satis Mukerji.
Kali Rai.	Chuni Lal Nandi.
Bepin Ganguli.	Harish Chandra Sirkar.

Indra Nath Nandi.

At the *Chatra Bhandar* mess I often met—

Abinash Chandra Bhattacharji.	Surendra Nath Chakravarti.
Soilendra Nath Ghose.	Akhoy Kumar Bhattacharji.
Bhupendra Nath Datta.	Nogendra Nath Halдар.
Sishir Kumar Ghose.	Chuni Lal Nandi.
Bijoy Kumar Nag.	Tinkori Das.
Boidya Nath Banerji.	Indra Nath Nandi.
Behari Lal Rai and Behari Lal <i>alias</i> Lal Behari Rai.	Probash Chandra De, of Mechua Bazar
Ganesh Chandra Das.	Nikileswar Rai Moulik.
Harendra Nath Banerji.	Pabitra Chandra Datta.
Jotindra Nath Mitra.	Barindra Nath Ghose.
	Ulaskar Datta.

Birendra Nath Sen.

At Indra Nath Nandi's house I often met—

Prokash Ch. Maiti.	P. Mitra.
Ganesh Chandra Das.	Arabindo Ghosh.
Harendra Nath Banerji.	Sushil Kumar Sen.
Behari Lal <i>alias</i> Lal Behari Rai.	Birendra Nath Sen.
Behari Lal Rai.	Hem Chandra Das.
Bibhuti Rai.	Abinash Ch. Bhattacharji
Jotindra Nath Mitra.	Annada Kaviraj.
Norendra Nath Bose.	Nikileswar Rai.
Sishir Kumar Ghose.	Rukhini Rai.
Abinash Ch. Chakravarti	Nitya Gopal Chatterji.
Durga Charan Banerji.	Taranath Rai Chaudhuri.
Bipin Chandra Ganguli.	Hari Charan Banerji.
Sudhir Kumar Sen.	Lokhendra Nath Gupta.

Bimala Charan Deb.	Sarat Chandra Gupta's
Noni Gopal Gupta.	second son.
Madaru <i>alias</i> Jogesh Ch.	Baroda Chakravarti.
Mitter. (I omitted to	Satish Chakravarti.
mention him before	Satish Chandra Bose.
as one of	Baidya Nath Banerji.
the Sibpur Society.)	Atul Babu.
Bhotan Babu.	Sushil Kumar Bose.
R. N. Rai.	

At Annada Kaviraj's I often met—

Nikhileswar Rai Moulik.	Prabash Ch. Mitra.
Kiron Ch. Mukerji.	Prosanta Mitra.
Jitendra Nath Banerji.	Kisori Lal Gupta.
Birendra N. Chatterji.	Labanga.

In Indra Nandi's garden at Ballygunge I met often—

Harendra N. Banerji.	Narendra N. Bose.
Behari Lal <i>alias</i> Lal	Nani Gopal Gupta.
Bihari Rai.	Madaru <i>alias</i> Jagesh Ch.
Jotindra N. Mitra.	Mitra
	Bhotan Babu.

At the *Chatra Bhandar* office, formerly 113, Harrison Road afterwards at No. 4-1, College Square—

Ashesh Kumar Banerji.	Probash Ch. De, M.A.,
Indra Nath Nandi.	Sukmoy Mitra.
	Narendra N. Bose.

And the staff of the office, namely—

Nogendra N. Haldar.	Chuni Lal Nandi.
Akhoy Kumar Bhattacharji	Narain Das Mukerji.

Also not of the staff—

Nikhileswar Rai.	Baidya Nath Banerji.
Sarat Chandra Khan.	Behari <i>alias</i> Lal Behari Rai.

At Sarat Mitter's at Kidderpur—

Bimola Ch Deb	Surjan Singh (10th Jats)
Manik Lal Karmakar	Haridas Chakravarti
Rakhal Ch Das	Kumaresh Sirkar
Devendra N. Sirkar	Jotindra N. De
Bonmali Karmakar	Robindra N. Deb Rai

Ashutosh Ghose	Amaresh Kanjilal
Charu Ch Ghose	Noni Gopal Gupta
Behari Lal Ghose	Keshab Ch. De
Jitendra N. Biswas	Satish Ch. Sirkar
Panna Lal De	Bidhu Bhusan Biswas
Chunai Havildar	Tinkori Das
(10th Jats)	Rajani Bhattacharji

[Then says : I remember two more names in Calcutta — Keshab Ch De and Parmananda Ghosal. I saw them at Sarat Mitter's house.]

At Noni Gopal Gupta's I often met—

Poran <i>alias</i> Suresh Ch. Mazumdar ; the Krishnagar pleader, who is master of Nibaran <i>alias</i> Karu Da ; Bimola Ch Deb	Chunai Havildar. Surjan Singh Charu Ghose Sarat Ghose Jotin Dada Satis Sarkar
Sarat Ch Mitra Narendra Nath Chatterji Hem Chandra Sen. Bhusan Chandra Mitra Bistupada Chatterji and Bistopada (Chatterji or Mukerji).	Sirish Ch Sirkar Amaresh Kanjilal Kalipada Chakravarti Upendra Nath De Paramananda Ghoshal Hari Das Chakravarti. Madaru Mitra.

I omitted the name of Haridhan Chaudhuri, of Mozilpur near Jaynagar, 24-Parganas. I saw him at Sarat Mitter's house.

I saw Soilen Das at Noni Gopal's and Sarat Mitter's house often.

After the incident about 7, Alipur Lane, I was sent by Indra Nandi to Chedapathor in Bankura (it is a jungly hillock), to fetch Rukini Rai who was ill. I went there in 1906 in *Aghran* on the day of the *Rash Jatra*. I brought him back the same night I found him. I had a map of the Bankura district, and he told me to get out at Gidni and hire a cooly who could take me to the place. It took me from morning to evening to walk from Gidni station there. The cooly was a Sonthal. We came back by bullock cart. There was a sort of fort there. I will speak

about it later. We came back to the *Chatra Bhandar* mess. Narendra N. Bose and Nitya Gopal Chatterji were also at Chedapathor, and we left them there.

A few days after I was sent there by Indra, as there was a dearth of men there. I saw in the jungle a wall was being built on four sides and a moat had been dug round it. I heard from Naren and Nitya that a zamindar of Midnapore, Digambar Nando or Chando had given a few thousand rupees and told them to make a fort, clear the jungle, and cultivate or whatever they liked with the place. We cleared the jungle and grew *chola* and *chinabadam* and built the wall. The wall could not be seen from outside as there were hills all round, and the wall was built round the hollow. It was intended to build several houses inside. I was there two or three months. I left as I fell ill and returned to the *Chatra Bhandar* mess. I returned after the Congress. As I was ill with malaria, I was treated at the mess by Nobin Ch. Datta, of Freer's Lane Pharmacy, uncle of Pabitra Datta. Indra Nandi later paid for my medical attendance. When I was better I worked at the *Chatra Bhandur*. I went to stay at Indra Nandi's about *Asar* or *Sraban*, and there Prokash Ch. Maiti, Ganesh Ch. Das, Behari Lal alias Lal Behari Rai, Bibhuti Rai, Behari Lal Rai, Harendra Nath Banerji, Boidya Nath Banerji, Jotindra Nath Mitra came and stayed there too. Harendra Banerjee cooked and we slept on the second floor and some at times slept on the third floor. Indra's servant Kamal, and the lame maidservant who brought the flowers when I was initiated, attended on us ; he brought our food from Arpuli Lane from a *mudi* shop opposite No. 2, Arpuli Lane, where there is a mess. While with Indra, I kept the arms clean and saw whether the cartridges and revolvers were in order. I saw to that by shooting in a mat in front of the Ballygunge railway station. There was a stack of bricks there, and there is no village near. There were 20 or 25 revolvers to keep in order every day. I was there about three months, and went to my house just before the *pujas*. I returned after the *pujas* and went to a mess at 66, Nebutola Lane.

(At this stage the evidence was read over to the witness and

admitted by him to be correct, but he says that he now remembers more names of members of the secret society.)

I also remember the name of Promode Indu Ghose, of Isser Mill's Lane, Rai Bagan. He used to work under Jatindra Dada, to whom I used to take letters. He also used to come to 10-1, Musalmanpara Lane, where was a Rajshahi district mess.

Also Bankim Chandra Chatterji, of Boinchee, district Hoogly, who worked at the *Devi Bhandar* at Boinchee, which is a shop belonging to the secret society, just as the *Chatra Bhandar* shop was.

Also Satyendra N. Chatterji, of Boinchee, district Hooghly, who was head of the society in that locality.

Also Nirapada Rai, of Midnapore, who lived with us in the *Chatra Bhandar* mess and at Indra's house. He served in the branch of the *Chatra Bhandar* at Midnapore.

Also Satendra Nath Bose, of Midnapore, head of the Midnapore, branch of the *Chatra Bhandar*.

Also Gyanendra Nath Biswas, of Koya, district Nadia. He lived at 144 or 145, Mirzapur Street, where I took him revolvers many times.

Also Promotha Nath Moitra, of Rajshahi district. He worked under Jotin Dada.

Also Birendra Nath Dutt Gupta, living in a mess near the *Banik* or *Banijaya Press* near the Harrison Road and Mirzapur Street junction. I often worked with him.

There are many others of the secret society, besides, whose names I do not know, but I could identify if I saw. There are two or three hundred such. I heard there were 10,000 to 12,000 members throughout India—in Bengal, Bombay, Punjab, Jaypur.

Sd. H. P. DUVAL
26-3-10

READ over to witness in my presence and admitted correct—in English and Bengali.

(Sd.) LALIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI

H. P. DUVAL
26-3-10

Recalled on 20th March 1910

On return I stayed at 66, Nebutola, the Calcutta High School One day Probash Ch. Deb, M. A., of the *Atmonnati Samiti*,

told me, Nitya Gopal Chatterji, and Kali Rai to go and work at the *Jugantar Press*, which was then at Bow Bazar Street. On that same day as I went to work there the police closed the place. A few days before that Bhupendra Nath Datta, the Editor, had been sent to jail, and the case of Abinash Chakravarti, the Manager, was going on. The office was in the press, and I worked there a week. Then I went back to Indra Nandi's house, taking my clothes, etc., from my lodging in Nebutola, and stayed there a short time and then went to stay at his Ballygunge garden to live there. There I did target practice, dagger play, and used to float in the tank *sola* bundles for targets. We also had target practice on the land. We were—I, Lal Behari Rai, Jotin Mitter, Horen Banerji, and Narendra Bose. Many others of our secret society used to come there at times, too. At times I went to Indra Nandi's house. One day Probash Chandra Deb, M. A., Narendra N. Bose, Lalit Mohan Palit, Bimola Ch. Deb, Pabitra Ch. Datta, Kali Rai, and Indra Nandi were sitting in his town house on the third floor. I came from the garden-house and saw them. They were talking about the Chingripota dacoity which was being plotted. Probash Ch. Chingripota.

De, M. A., promised to supply the men. Indra Nandi said he could get the necessary arms. Some few days after the dacoity took place. I did not go to it. Indra Nandi sent me to fetch money from Kali Rai, of Champatala. Kali Rai gave me a little over Rs. 200. I gave that money to Indra Nandi. Afterwards Indra Nandi wrote to Probash De, M. A., saying that, as your *samiti* did the dacoity, it is right that you should have some of the money for the benefit of your *samiti*. I saw this letter and took it with money to Probash. There were some notes. I do not remember how much.

I, Baidyanath Banerji, Lal Behari Rai and, I think, Moni Brahmin, went to Khanakul, Krishnagar, taking there a magic-lantern. We showed our magic-lantern. We used to exhibit pictures and explain the purport, to attract the people, who came to see them, to our cause. There were pictures of the French and Boer War, etc. Thence we took steamer and came to Kamalpur, which is opposite Tamluk. Then we went to the

house of a *Koibarta* zamindar and showed a magic-lantern there.

Baidyanath returned from Kamalpur, and I and Lal Behari Rai went to my maternal uncle's house at Shibgunge, district Howrah. There I showed the magic-lantern in Ramanath Keora Mandal's house in the northern *para* of the village. On the way back to Calcutta we showed the magic-lantern at a place called Sitapur, in the house of one Ram Chandra Chakravarti. I went, on return to Calcutta, to the mess of Bhawani Ch. Dutt's Lane (*Jugantar*). This was in the beginning of 1908, about *Magh*. Behari Rai was with me there. Then the *Chatra Bhandar* was at 113, Harrison Road, still. I heard on arrival at the mess that Pabitra Datta and Nogendra Nath Haldar had gone to the Bombay-Jeypur side. They came back the day there was a theft at the *Chatra Bhandar*. The theft was at night, and they arrived the next morning. The mess at Bhawani Ch. Dutt's Lane was then broken up, and I returned to Indra Nandi's house. Baidyanath Banerji went to Sarat Khan's house at 23, Goabagan, Prokash Maiti, Bibhuti Rai, and Behari Lal Rai went to their houses. Haren Banerji got ill and went home. Indra told me to do the work I was doing before (seeing to the pistols, etc.). In the end of *Falgun*, on the day of the *Sivaratri*, I, Moni Brahmin, Haren (who had returned to us by then) went to Kalikapur, near Champahati station on the Canning line, and stayed in the house of Satis Ch. Chakravarti. We there opened a public *samiti*, with a library attached, for *lathi* play. We also initiated some few people—*chogras*—at the temple of Annapurna. We left Bhagabati Chakravarti of our society in charge of the *samiti* and came back to Calcutta, about the time of Good Friday, I think. I, Behari *alias* Lal Behari Rai, Sakaram Ganesh Deoskar, Debi Prasanna Rai Chaudhuri, Gispati Kabyathirta, Narain Das, and Kisori Mohan Gupta went to Khanakul, Krishnagar, and there was a meeting, and we showed *lathi* and sword play. Narain Das's brother was a member of our secret society, and he told me there was a *kamar*, who had been initiated in our society, who made swords, spears, and "daggers" and supplied them with them. I went to see the

kamar with Narain's brother and Lal Behari Rai, and ordered some daggers and spears (*ballab*), and said he would have to supply them in future. We were there four or five days, and he gave us some daggers and spears, and we brought them to Calcutta to Indra Nandi's house. Lal Behari Rai then went home to Nandanpur on our way back. I told Indra of what had occurred, and he sent a drawing of the kind of swords and daggers he wanted with money to Lal Behari. He sent the money by money-order to give to the *kamar* to make the weapons. I then returned to the Ballygunge garden and went on with target practice. After that we removed to Indra's house. About the time we left the garden the Manicktola branch were arrested. On that account we left the garden and came to Calcutta, bringing away our arms from the garden. One day at 5 P.M. or 6 P.M. Narendra Nath Chatterji of Sibpur came to Indra Nandi's house. Indra Nandi told me to give him four or five good revolvers and some good cartridges in a red canvas bag, and I did so. Indra told me that, if anyone came to see him to his house, to say he had gone out on an invitation. Chuni Lal Nandi, Indra Nath Nandi, Narendra Nath Chatterji, and Lal Behari Rai, taking a bag, went away. Next morning, at 7 A.M. Chuni Lal, Indra Nath and Lal Behari returned and gave me the bag. When I opened it I found in it the revolvers, which I had given them unloaded, were loaded. I saw in the newspaper that a dacoity had been committed at Sibpur. [Volunteers:] Shortly before the arrest of the Manicktola people the *Chatra Bhandar* shop was removed to No. 4—1, College Square.

One day after that Bimola Ch. Deb in the room of the third floor, with Narendra Nath Bose, Indra Nandi, Noni Gopal Gupta, Pabitra Ch. Datta, was seated together with me and Haren Banerji, and it was being discussed as to where we should live after leaving the Ballygunge garden. At the time Madaru *alias* Jagesh Mitter came there in a state of excitement, running, saying Naren Chatterji had been arrested in the Sibpur dacoity. This was in *Baisakh*. We then put the arms which were in one box into two boxes (one of which was mine). I have already

described about their removal. One was taken to Taranath Rai Chaudhuri's house at No. 4, Raja's Lane. Lal Behari Rai took it. Two men went ahead and two behind to watch it. The other was taken to Pabitra Dutta to be conveyed by him to Noni Gopal Gupta's house at Sibpur. This was my box. One day I heard from Indra that the character of Narendra Nath Bose was bad and that he visited and stayed with a prostitute in Champatola Lane. He showed me the house, and told me to find out if the report was true. I made enquiries and found it was true. Naren, having heard, used not to come and meet us. Indra told us to arrange to punish him for being with the prostitute. I told Naren that there were some more hidden arms in the Ballygunge garden buried there, and asked him to come with me and remove them. It was not true, but I knew Naren intended at that time to start a society of his own. I also said I would leave Indra and join him and would get arms in this way. I told Indra what I was doing. On the day we fixed to go with Naren, Indra, Noni Gopal, Bhutan Mukherji, Madaru, Harendra Nath Banerji, Lal Behari Rai. Jotin Mitter went ahead and hid in the house. After 9 P.M., I came with Naren. Going into the garden, I said, "I have the key of the house. Let us go inside and see what is there." I opened the door (it was not locked) and put Naren inside, and they seized him. They then stripped him naked and gave him 45 stripes with a horse whip. On that very night I and Haren Banerji went to the Ballygunge railway station to see what chance there was of committing a dacoity there.

The next morning we came back to Calcutta and took him to his house. Indra told the whole story to his mother, and it was arranged that I and Jotin Mitter should nurse Naren, and we got medicines from the dispensary of Rai & Co., Bow Bazar. Naren recovered, and an arrangement was made for his marriage, which took place at Kidderpur. I was not there on the night of the marriage but on the *bou-bhat* day I was there with many members of our society, and we were fed at a house just in front of No. 15-1 or 15-2, Mirzapur Street. I, Haren and Jotin received the guests, and Indra was in charge of the food.

After the marriage we gave the lady a present of a gold comb. I do not remember what was inscribed on the comb.

We did nothing in regard to committing a dacoity at the Ballygunge railway station.

One day, on the third floor of his house, Indra Nandi took bomb to his room for taking out the materials and putting new explosives in. I asked him what was to be done with it, and he said it was to be made and used again for Kingsford. He praised Khudiram and Profulla Chaki, and asked me if I could undertake the job. He opened the old bomb in my presence ; on a sudden it burst in his hand. He fell down senseless and pieces of his hand were scattered about the room. I came to call his father, but his father came up on hearing the noise. A lot of people came into the roof of Lahiri's dispensary and on the verandah of Bankim Chatterji, Deputy Magistrate's house. He washed and bandaged the hand and gave him water. The Colonel told me to say that he met an accident by the top of the iron safe falling on his hand when he was opening it, if I were asked. No one else was there. That evening a *chogra* brought a letter to Indra Nandi. I took it to Indra, and Indra told me to take it to Narendra Nath Bose. I did so, and he told me that we should not go out that day. At 4 or 5 P. M. Naren Babu gave a revolver, some cartridges, a 10-rupee note each to me, Lal Behari Rai, and Haren Banerji, and said we were to go to Telkal Ghat station on the Howrah Amta line. We went there separately. We on arrival, found no one elsethere. I wanted to ease myself, and knowing a man named Promatha Nath Bose in Burn's office there I went to him. I asked him to take my revolvers, which were wrapped up in a piece of paper. He at first refused to do so. Finally he was persuaded to. I then left it with him and went to a corrugated latrine in the compound of the factory which he had shown me. I then returned to the station and saw Narendra Nath Chatterji, Bhutan Mukherji, Madaru, Bistupada Chatterji, Upen Deb of Santragachi and some others, whose names I do not remember. Bhutan was drunk and began to misbehave himself, so Naren Chatterji abandoned the idea of going on that day. After that I, Lal

Behari Rai, and Harendra Nath Banerji went to Nani Gopal Gupta's house at Sibpur. That was my first visit there. The same day I came back to Indra's house, crossing the river by Ramkrishnapur Ghat. A few days after Jotin Mitter fell ill and went home. On my return I told Indra, who was sorry at what had occurred, and he told me to take the three revolvers and cartridges to Pabitra Datta at the *Chatra Bhandar* and I gave them to him and he put them in the iron safe. Indra then gave me, Lal Behari, and Haren Banerji Rs. 25 each, and told our work was to leave Calcutta and work there, collecting men for the secret society. Two or four days after I went first to Benares to 23, Harar Bagh, to the house of my brother-in-law, Ambica Charan Bhattacharji. The other two followed two days afterwards and they stayed at a rented house where there was a Life Insurance Company. This was in the bazar near the Dasasmedh Ghat. We then and there arranged to work, and I was to take the Bengalitola up to Kedar Ghat in the Oudh Mahalla, Behari was to take from Dasasumedh Ghat up to the Chakbazar, Haren from the Chakbazar up to the Cantonment

I first opened a rowing club from Kedar Ghat to Ramnagar Raja's Ghat. I used to take *chogras* for rowing from 5-30 P. M. to 8-30 P. M. My idea was to make a profit for the club and with it start *samitis*. I opened then a *samiti* (*Matri Sebak Samiti*) at Harar Bagh. My object was out of the members I would select some to be members of our secret society. It was held in the grounds behind the house of Surendra Nath Chatterji; the land where it was held belonged to a Marwari. There I taught *lathi*, dagger, and sword play after enclosing the ground, and they had other exercises too. In order to attract their minds and attention I used to hold meetings on Sundays, when I discussed the lives and doings of our country's heroes, e. g., Sivaji, Protapaditya, and of Mazzini and Garibaldi. There was another *akara* near Narad Ghat, where some *chogras* met, which existed before I was there. I used to teach there two or three days a week. I got control of it. After some days Naren Bose, his wife, mother, and nephew came to Benares. He stayed a day with my brother-in-law, and from there I went with him

to a hired house in Sonarpura and stayed there. Phani Mitra, printer of the *Jugantar*, used to live there, and at this time Sachindra Nath Mitra was living there. He is Phani's brother. One day I went to the Dasasumedh Ghat, and there I met Taranath Rai Chaudhuri, dressed as a *baisnab* in disguise, coming towards Kedar Ghat. Seeing him I began to follow him. I brought him to our house after making signs to him. Naren asked me to go with Taranath to see where he was living. I went with him, and he told me I was to call him Shamdas Babaji. The next day Santi Ghose in *sahib's* clothing came to my brother-in-law's house, and from there he came to our lodging and stayed with us. As the house was now inconvenient for us to stay in longer, we hired a house attached to the temple of Kedar Nath. That was in the charge of an old Brahmin who was called by us "Doctor Dada." We heard from Santi that Naren Gossain had mentioned his name in Court, and so he had come away to Benares. Some two or three days after removing there, Pabitra Datta and Chuni Nandi came to Benares to my brother-in-law. Chuni came to our house, and as it was not convenient for us all to live there, we left it and hired a house in the Oudh Mahalla. Taranath Rai Chaudhuri finding the *baisnab* disguise inconvenient for him to live there, we hired another house for him, and I gave my trunk, bedding, and clothes to him for him to change his dress. He lived separately, no longer dressing as a *baisnab*. While we were at Oudh Mahalla, Pabitra Datta gave me a letter to take to Subodh Mallik, who was living in a house in the *mat* beyond Benares Cantonment. He sent in answer Rs. 250, and told me that we should not keep Taranath with us, as he could not keep a secret. So Taranath kept separate from us. I brought the letter and money back to Pabitra Datta. Naren's wife and mother fell ill, and I brought them back to Calcutta to their house here. After leaving them here I returned to Benares. Chuni Nandi had come back with me to Calcutta. He did not return to Benares with me. I met Indra in Calcutta, and he told me he would like me, Haren or Lal Behari to stay with him. So, on my return, I sent Lal Behari to him ; but the very day he arrived

in Calcutta Indra was arrested. We then determined to separate owing to this arrest. One night at 2 A. M. three *bhadralogs* (one was Ashu Bhattacharji or Banerji doctor, who had dispensary at Sonarpur) came to our house and said they had heard from a friend of his in the police that we were going to be arrested next morning, and we should leave at once, and they had given the same information to our companion who lived at Harar Bagh (*i. e.*, Taranath). As they left, Taranath arrived with his belongings and he went and hid himself in the *Kalibari* of Cooch Behar with the manager there. We all returned to Calcutta, some by the Express and some by the Punjab Mail. On my return I went home to Netra. While there I used to come from time to time to the *Chatra Bhandar* in Calcutta. Pabitra Datta and Bimala Ch. Deb one day came to me and told me to go to Dacca. I asked why, and Pabitra said I was to bring back some things which had been taken in the Barra dacoity, and which were in the house of some one at Dacca. I would find a man I knew at the Dacca station on my arrival there.

I went to Dacca. Pabitra had given me a red canvas bag, and on the station I saw the second son of Sarat Gupta pleader, whom I know. He took me to his house in Lakhi Bazar. The next day he filled up the bag with things I did not see, and he gave me a loaded revolver, which I brought back in my waist over my stomach. I came back to Pabitra Datta and gave him the revolver, and bag, and the key of the bag. I do not know what was in the bag. It was given me closed, and it is against our rule to look into it. It was very heavy. This was after the *pujas* or about the *pujas* of 1908.

(Sd.) LALIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI

READ over by me to the witness in English (Bengali explained where necessary) and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
28-3-10.

RECALLED ON 29TH MARCH 1910

VOLUNTEERS : I want to say something more about Benares which I omitted yesterday. I said that Chuni Nandi and

Pabitra Datta came to Benares and went to my brother-in-law's house. With them was a man name Behari Datta or Sur—a Sarnabanya of Garpar—and Narain Das Bhattacharji and another man, whose name I do not know. Narain Das Bhattacharji is my brother-in-law's brother. The men I initiated myself in Benares were Tarak Nath Bose, Surendra Nath Chatterji, Bhusan Chandra Bhattacharji. Haripada De, Bhusan Chandra De, Debendra Nath Bhattacharji, Surendra Nath Chakravarti, Dr. Binoyendra Nath Chatterji, Annada Bhattacharji, and Atul Chatterji. When I left Benares I left Binoyendra Nath in charge of the *samiti* and of the secret society.

These people lived at Benares a long time. Binoyendra is the doctor of the Chintamani Ganesh Homoeopathic Pharmacy.

After return from Dacca I went home. After a short time I returned to 66, Nebutola Lane. At that time I began to visit Kidderpur and Sibpur. One day I heard from Nani Gopal Gupta that Rs. 3,000 had been given to Naren Bose to go to Benares and open a shop. From the profits the expenses of our secret society there were to be defrayed. One day Madaru came to me at Nebutola Lane. He took me to Serpentine Lane and showed me a house and pointed out a man whom I had previously seen in the Alipur Magistrate's Court. After showing him to me, he took me to Sibpur to Nani Gopal Gupta's house. Nani told me I was to watch that house in Serpentine Lane and the man. The next day I was to report what I had seen. I went the next morning and reported to him what times he went out and when he sat in the outer room in the lower storey. He told me that there was one Charu Ghose of Chetla of the Royal Insurance office (I knew him from before) and I was to go to him and take from him to Hem Sen what he gave me. I went and saw Charu. He took me to his office tiffin room, and took out from his coat a box of cartridges and a revolver which he had concealed in his waist and gave them to me. I then went to Mechua Bazar and gave them to Hem Sen. I then returned to 66, Nebutola Lane. A few days after Bistupada Chatterji came to my *basha* and told me to watch the man

I had watched before again, and that there was a *pan* shop in the ground floor of a white two-storied house in St. James's Square, and I was to tell a man I met there fully what I saw during that day. He said the man would go there after 5 P. M. before dusk. He told me he was a man I knew. I went past the house three or four times, and towards evening more frequently. Before I left about dusk, to go to St. James's Square, I saw a black-looking Hindustani come out, and the *bhadralog* whom I had to watch was sitting on a *taktaposh* on the ground floor of the house writing. I found at the *pan* shop Hem Chandra Sen and Narendra Nath Bose standing there. I told Hem the whole circumstances, taking him aside. As I was talking to him Bhusan Chandra Mitra came to the *pan* shop from the direction of the bazar side in St. James's Square. The three began to talk together and then went towards that bazar and went into it. I followed them up to the bazar. After that Bhusan said I was no longer wanted and could go away. I came away from there to College Square. After walking 15 or 20 minutes I was anxious, and I returned home to Nebutola. As I was taking off my shoes Harinath Banerji, a *bhadralok* of the mess, said a man had been murdered at the *Chowmata* in Serpentine Lane. I went with my shoes half off to the spot, and there I saw a crowd round a body which was bleeding profusely and lying on the ground. I then had suspected the man I watched was the murdered man, and I returned home. I could not see the man well owing to the crowd and it was dark. The name of the man I had watched was Nanda Lal Banerji. Sures Mitra told me his name. The next day Pabitra Datta came and took me to the *Chatra Bhandar* office at 4-1, College Square. He gave me a letter to go to Kidderpur to Sarat Mitra. On my way I went by Mirzapur Street, and there I saw an immense crowd standing. There I saw many *bhadralogs* and the dead body of a *bhadralog* being carried on a *khatia*, many *bhadralogs* following ; among them one or two police officers in plain dress following. I had heard the body of Nanda had been taken to the Medical College, so I knew this was his body. I went on to Kidderpur, and at Sarat Mitra's house I

saw Charu Chandra Ghose, Surjan Sing, Sarat Mitra, Suresh Mitra, and Naren Chatterji. Charu Ghose, on seeing me, laughingly said, "*Kyha sandesh kow. Amar catridger ki rakam jhor dekhile.*" Then I clearly understood that those three men murdered Nanda Lal. The school in which I lived in Nebutola belonged to Narain Chandra Bhattacharji; and after Nanda's murder, Narain's nephew (I forget his name) was arrested, and the police began to enquire vigorously in the mess and in that quarter. I therefore in fear removed to Sarat Mitter's house at Kidderpur. The house of Sarat was in Manasatola Lane when the conversation related above occurred, but when I removed there, he had taken a house at 86-1, Diamond Harbour Road. After I had been there two or four days Naren Chatterji went to the Punjab. After a few days he returned with fever and pain in his chest. He was in a bad way and could not write, and he told me to write to Nani Gopal a letter which he dictated. He wrote that he made all the arrangements in the matter on which he had been sent, and that the soldier of the 10th Jats who had been dismissed had gone to the Punjab, and that he had left everything with him (this soldier had been dismissed at the beginning of 1908), and that Rs. 150 a month would have to be sent him each month, and that within a month or two another *bhadralog* would come from there, and that the first Rs. 150 would have to be sent within two or three days. I took this letter to Nani.

Two or three days after Bhutan Babu (Mukherji) brought some rupees and gave them to Naren Chatterji at Sarat's house. Naren told me to go and call Bonomali Karmakar. I brought him, and he gave the money to him to be changed into notes. Before sunset Naren gave me the notes and told me to go to the gate of Belvedere nearest the Zoological Gardens, and there I would find a soldier on sentry duty, and that he was a man I know. As I was walking along I was to drop the notes on the road in front of that man. I went to Belvedere gate and saw Surjan Singh on duty walking up and down. As he was walking in the direction of the road leading to the Magistrate's Court. I dropped the notes in front of him. He picked up the notes

and I came away. The Calcutta *parawalla* was then facing the other way. This was about the end of *Aghran* 1908.

Some days after I took some money and some notes to the garden opposite the Alipur lines and by Belvedere. • In front of the garden across the road are three trees in the lines. It was very dark under the trees after evening there. I was told by Naren to go there and would find two or three people whom I knew. When I went I found Chunai Havildar and Surjan Singh and another soldier, whom I had seen coming to Sarat's house, but whose name I do not remember, and gave the money into Chunai's hand and came away.

I then went to target practice in the Sundarbans. Kumar Krista Bose, Madaru, Bistupada Chatterji, Narendra N. Chatterji, Bhusan Chandra Mitra, Suresh Ch. Mitra, Charu Ghosh, Charu Ghose's two sister's sons, Behari Ghosh of Chetla, Bhudi, Kiran Rai went out for the night at Charu's house at Chetla. Then we went in the morning to Dhakuria station and thence by train to Diamond Harbour. Kumar Krista had got two big boats ready. We went by them to Karamjali in these boats and stayed there that night. The next day we went eight miles beyond Kakdip. There on the sea-shore we did target practice. This went on for two days. I was first on the second day and I got a small gold medal. On one side of it was a Sanskrit inscription and Charu Ghose's name in English, and on the other side was the *Jugantar* flag. We returned back to Kidderpur. I left the medal at home on one occasion when I went home.

On return in the early morning I saw in the Doctor's house a Punjabi of handsome appearance with a silk *pagri* and a gold bangle on either his right or left forearm and two very small rings (*makuri*) on his ears, and a big gold chain hanging from his neck, sitting there with Sarat and Satish Mitra, Naren Chatterji, Bhuban Mukherji of Sibpur, Bimola Charan Deb, and a Marwari *poddar* of Watgunge, Kidderpur. I heard he had come two days before, and he would go that night by the evening mail. In the evening Surjan Singh, Chunai Havildar and several—eight or ten others—soldiers came and went and

were showing him great respect. That night we came to Howrah and saw him off. I, Naren Chatterji, Satish Mitra, and from Sibpur, Nonigopal, Madaru, and Bistu Chatterji saw him off. I did not know his name, but next day Sarat Mitra told me he was a great man and a member.

At X mas holidays, too, we went again to target practice. Naren Chatterji, Suresh Mitra, Jiten Biswas, Bhudi, Behari Ghose, Charu Ghose's two nephews, and Charu Ghose went. When we got to Diamond Harbour there was a very high wind, and so we did not dare start that day. Charu's *mamato bhai* met us at the station, and he took us to the house of Sanyasi Ghose, a contractor at Diamond Harbour, across the *khal*. There we had our meal, and after that we went shooting at birds up to Kuleswar, where Charu's maternal uncle, Dwarka N. Mitra, lives. We had two rifles, three guns carried in our bedding. There was also the licensed guns of Charu Ghose and Jiten Biswas. We reached Dwarka's house at 8 P. M. When we were eating at Sanyasi's house, his servant Chintamani Samanta was, I found, a man of my village, whom I knew from before and he saw us.

Next day in the morning Charu Ghose took us to a *khal* about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Kuleswar and there was a very big *mât* with an earthen mound with a recess in front (like the butt at Ballygunge, only smaller), and there we put up our target and practised. While we were shooting, people from the village across the *mât* and from the village on this side of the *khal* came out to see. We returned the next afternoon by the 7-30 P.M. train to Sarat's house.

Two or four days after I was in the upper storey, and I saw soldiers with a band marching in procession across the Kidderpur bridge, and they came down the Diamond Harbour Road past our house. Among them was a havildar with a red tape across his breast (means his sash). Naren was in the upper storey with me. This havildar and four or five other soldiers in the procession salamed Naren. That day Sarat Mitra told me they were members of our society. I could not see the number of the regiment, but the soldiers seemed to be Rajputs.

After a few days Naren told me that Chunai Havildar and Surjan Singh would be going to target practice at Agarpara or Kanchrapara with other soldiers. I was to get into the same train with them and take a ticket for Dum-Dum or Belgharia, and not go further, and to give them the money he gave me, giving it either to Chunai or Surjan. There were some rupees inside notes. I do not know how much. I went and got in the train, sitting on the bench opposite to them, and I paid the money to them. I went as far as Dum Dum and returned from there *via* Sealdah to Kidderpur.

Jotindra N. De, of Barrackpur, told me he had a British sword, and he wanted to make a present of it to our *samiti*.

[*Then says :—*I have made a mistake. When I first went to Sarat Mitra's and before Naren went to the Punjab, one day Naren Chatterji, Nani Gopal Gupta, Madaru, Bhotan, Keshab Ch. De, Sarat Mitra, Suresh Mitra were all together, and the talk was about the division of the money which Nani Gopal had from the Bighati dacoity. Keshab De wanted the money to be divided up. He was there, too. Nani Gopal said it was not looted for any member to spend on his household expenses, and that it was not to be divided. At that time a letter came by post to Naren. Chuni Nandi wrote that Tinkori Dass had got cholera at Mozilpur, Joynager, and that money was to be sent by urgent telegraphic money-order. Nani Gopal read the letter which Naren showed him, and I was sent to the post office with Rs. 10 to send the money. I went to the big post office in Circular Garden Reach Road. On return I saw Keshab was very angry and Nani was also angry. After a bit Keshab left.

*Resumes re Jotin De—*I told Nani Gopal about the British sword, and he told me to go and get it. I went with my bedding there and put the sword in it and brought it to the house of Kumaresh Sirkar, which is just opposite the house of Surendra Nath Banerji in Manirampur. I made a hole in the *razai* of my bedding and put the sword inside it through this hole, and thus brought the sword back. I then crossed from near the house of Kumaresh to Sheoraphuli *hat* and thence came to Calcutta. I

came this way lest I should be followed. I still use and have that bedding with me at the Fort, and I can show it to the Court. On my way back to Kidderpur I met Naren Chatterji, Devendra N. Sirkar, and Suresh Ch. Mitra near the bridge, and they came back with us. Next day I took the sword over to Nani Gopal's house, crossing over by the Watgunge Ghat. I then carried it, hanging it from my neck. I had my clothes over it and an overcoat over them. I gave the sword to Bistupada (No. 2) Chatterji or Mukherji (I do not remember his second name). After Nani sent me to Nattore with Satis Sirkar for the purpose of collecting men. This was in *Magh*, I think, the beginning of 1909. We went to the dispensary of Girish Ch. Sirkar, father of Sirish Sirkar, and we ate in his house and slept at the dispensary.

About a week after my arrival I saw Keshab De, Tinkori Das, and Bhusan Ch. Mitra came to the dispensary and remained there two days. One day Sirish Sircer, Keshab De, Tinkori Das, and Bhusan Chunder Mitra after 5 P. M. went out for a walk. Those who came from Calcutta had a white canvas bag with a revolver, *kukri*, and a few cartridges with them. They asked me to keep them, and I put them in my trunk. Before going out that afternoon they took, in the absence of Keshab, the revolver, cartridges, and the dagger. At night very late, 9 or 10 P. M., three of them, Sirish Sirkar, Bhusan Mitra, and Tinkori Das, returned. Keshab did not come back. According to our rules, I asked nothing. That night by the Darjeeling Mail Bhusan and Tinkori left for Calcutta. They did not return the revolver, or *kukri*, but the canvas bag remained with me. The next day Sirish Sirkar (he is not a man who can keep secrets) took me out for a walk and took me to the Kunjyabari of the Raja of Nattore, and on the way he began to talk, saying that Keshab had been killed and showed me big holes, where post are put in for erecting a *nahabat* at the time of the *Rath*. He pointed out one of the four holes and said the body, except the head, had been buried there. I noticed the four holes had been recently filled up. From there he took me about two miles to the Godai river past Dighapatia. There is a steamer ghat of

the Dighapatia Raja, and about half a mile from there he showed me a tree in the *mat* and said that Keshab's head was buried near the tree. There was a pair of spectacles in the canvas bag belonging to Keshab, which he wore when he went to commit decoity, etc. The frames of those spectacles are the frames of the spectacles I am now wearing. Before that I had silver frames. I was afraid and, without telling Sirish Sirkar, I fled from Naitore back to Kidderpur. I never mentioned about the murder of Keshab. One day Naren went out in the evening and returned in the morning, and told me and Suresh to go to Nani Gopal's house.

(Sd.) LALIT MOHAN CHAKRAVARTI

READ over to witness in English and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

29-3-1910

RECALLED ON 30TH MARCH 1910

In the morning Suresh and I went to Nani Gopal's house the same day. He gave us a revolver, 25 cartridges, and one 10 rupee note each, and said, "after 5 P. M. you will be at Telkal Ghat and you will meet people you know there and will do as they say." We returned to Kidderpur. Naren Chatterji told me to fetch a bottle of poison from the house of Ashutosh Ghose, of Munshigunge Road. I brought the bottle from Ashutosh's. On that day Naren Chatterji had diarrhoea. Sarat Mitra told me to go and buy five rubber toy-balloons. I went and bought them at Dharamtala from a hawker and brought them to Sarat, who cut up the rubber and made pills of the poison by putting the powder in the pieces of rubber and tying the mouth of the ball with thread, and when we were starting for Telkal Ghat he gave me 12 pills to distribute among my companions.

Then we arrived at Telkal Ghat after 5 P. M. There we met Bhutan Mukerjee, Madaru, Bistupada Chatterji (No. 1), Chuni Nandi, two men of Santragachi, Kali Chakravarti and another, whom I afterwards knew to be Upen De — of Jougacha two men.

Suresh Mitra was with me. Bhushan Mitra was there, too, and Sailen Das was walking near the ghat. We all, except Sailen, took the train with tickets to Mashat given by Bhutan. The train started at dusk. Behind the station at Mashat is a *mat*. (It was night, and I can't say in what direction.) We went about a mile on it, and then sat under a tree when it was dark. We could hear the *golmal* of people at a Musalman *mela* and also saw the lights. The Jougacha men went and fetched food from the *mela*. When they came back, we heard their footsteps and hid ourselves, fearing they might be strangers. Chuni Asked them who they were and found they were the two men of Jougacha. They said, "*Gupta char*." The watchword was "*Gupta char*," and we used to frequently utter that cry as we were under Noni Gupta. After eating, none wanted to take the lead, and the Jougacha men said that in this dacoity we were to call "*Kaj*," not dacoity. Twenty five men would be necessary in this work ; a few people would not do, as the house where the dacoity was to be committed belonged to a *Suri* : it was a two-storied *pucca* house, and there was much money, but the *suri* had no son or children. For the reason we were few and none would lead, we did not do the dacoity that day. The *suri's* house was about one mile from the *mat* where we sat. We split up into two and so returned to Calcutta. I and Bistupoda went as far as Chanditola and there got in the train. All the others came in the same train, getting in at other stations. We all felt unwell, having been up all night. I, Bhutan, Bistupoda and, I think, Madaru and Kali Chakraborti got out at Kadamtola and went to the shop of Kali Chakravarti which belonged to our secret society. We had tea there and something to eat. We then went back to Sibpur, except Kali. I told Nani Gopal and returned the revolvers and money. I then returned to Kidderpur. Suresh was ahead of me, as he did not get out at Kadamtola. One day Panna Lal De and Ashutosh Ghose came and told me that there was a house in a *guli* off Circular Garden Reach Road, and it belonged to the people who had the *ganja* shop in Diamond Harbour Road near Babu Bazar. A part of that house is let out on hire for a mess. In the mess is a man ill with cholera,

and no one of the mess was there. I, Naren and Sarat Mitra went to see the ill man. We found Birendra Nath Datta Gupta, and another boy of Kidderpur was seated there : we also saw the sick man. I had known Birendra from before. We looked after the patient for two or three days. During that time I went once to Nani Gopal's house, and there I saw Bhuban Mukherji, brother of Bhutan. The pleader Chatterji, of Krishnagar, Gonesh Das, Sishir Kumar Bose, were sitting there. This was in *Falgun* of 1909. At that time a dark-complexioned *chogra* came. I had seen him before. Nani called him Shibu. He began to talk about his experiences and hardships in jail. From that I came to know that he had been arrested in connection with the Morehal dacoity, and Noni said that a man had been wounded in the dacoity, and on account of that I have now arranged about poisoned pills. Shibu did not know about poisoned pills and began to ask details. Nani said that, if any one was arrested or wounded in any dacoity, he will swallow the pill and die in a minute or two : if he refuses to take it himself, others will force him, lest afterwards he make any confession. On that day I came to know that our party had committed the Morehal dacoity. A few days after Nani Babu sent for me and Suresh Mitra, and told us "near your, village-3 or 4 miles from it is a village called Barya. There is the *Thakur Mongal Chandi*, and it has 20,000 or 25,000 rupees worth of golden ornaments". You two will go and see and, if you have opportunity, bring back the ornaments." He gave us each a revolver and 12 cartridges and 5 rupees each. On asking from whom he had heard, he said Hem Sen had told him. He asked me about the ornaments, but I said I did not know. The next day I and Suresh Mitra went to Dhakuria station and then by train to Basaldanga station. We went by the 1-54 train. On getting out of the train we saw the husband (an up-country man) of Sarat Mitra's maidservant : he had gone either to Bhadun or Bolsidhi, taking presents (*totwa*) to some one there. He was returning to catch a train back. We then went on to Barya. There we saw nothing. There was a *patsala* just by the temple. We opened the door as if to make *pranam* to the idol as

travellers, and saw there were no ornaments. We walked on from there to Diamond Harbour, as we did not want to wait about at Basaldanga station. Diamond Harbour is one and-a-half miles off. Amrita Lal Nath, the second master of the Diamond Harbour Government School, had expressed a wish to join our secret society ; so we went to his house. We heard he had gone to give lessons at the house of the 2nd Munsif. We went to 2nd Munsif's house. Suresh stood on the road and I went in and saw him. I had a red canvas bag with me containing the revolver and cartridges, and I put it on the table. There was a table with chairs round, and he and the boy he was teaching and I sat round the table. He suddenly opened the bag and, putting his hand in and finding the revolver there, pulled his hand out and showed fright. The boy was that year going up for the Entrance. I had some conversation with him and then returned to Kidderpur. At Diamond Harbour I met a few people of our village ; and my cousin, assistant head master of Diamond Harbour Government School, came in the same train with me. His name is Jotindra Jiban Chakravarti ; others we saw were Dinanath Deb, Moti Lal Bose, and Nogendra Nath Chakravarti of my village. My cousin pressed me at Netra station to get down, as I had given up going home regularly. I, however, refused and came to Kidderpur. Suresh got out at Sonarpur and went to his home at Baikantapur. Next day I reported what occurred to Nani Gopal at Sibpur. A few days after Nani Gopal sent for me, and I went and saw Bhuban Mukerji, Bimala Deb, Bistupada No. 2, sitting there. Nani said to me, "In your village Krista Kumar Mitra has some rupees. What are his circumstances, and how much has he got ? I said, "I have not been home for a long time. I cannot say now." He said Hem Sen had told him he was very well off, and so he had sent Hem Sen and Tinkori Das to see his house and make *bandabast*. You had better go home once and get *pucca* information about Krista Mitra. I went home. While I had been at Sarat Mitra's, I had heard from Tinkori Das that in Barodran village there is a petty zamindar named Baikanta Moral, and I should get information about him and

the place, so as to commit dacoity. I went home and stayed there a few days. I went one day from my house to Barodran and took with me Anath Saran Bose, nicknamed Binoy Bose (he is not a member of our society). I told him I was going to see Mohim Chandra Mitra, who was formerly a master of Hatuganj School, and I took four copies of "*Mukti kon Pathe*" with me. We first went to Mohim's house. From there I told the *chogra* that I had not seen Barodran village for a long time; we will go and see it. We went to the village and to the Moral's house. Binoy had a class friend of this family, and we met him in front of the house and he took us inside. There I saw Jogeshwar, a servant formerly in Binoy's house. He was a *Koiborto*, and under a pretext I made enquiries from him as to the number of durwans and other servants. Then we came away. After five or seven days I returned from my home to Kidderpur. I had seen about Krista Mitter's house too. This was about two or four days before the "*Dol*" festival. I went and told Nani Babu we might get 2,000 or 3,000 rupees from Krista's house. On the *Dol* day, just before evening, there was a *marpit* between me and an old Brahmin of Kidderpur. He had thrown red liquid on me, and as he was passing Sarat's house, I went to throw the red on him. He hit me on the left eye with his clenched fist (shows a very slight mark in the left part of the eyebrow). I hit him over the mouth with the bottle I had in my hand containing the red liquid. It broke his teeth, and he bled from the mouth. Naren and others from upstairs dashed out, and the Brahmin ran away. Sarat was not at home then. When he returned, he took me to Watgunge thana to make a diary entry. The entry was made and two constables and I and Sarat went by *gari* to the hospital at Alipur near the Magistrate's Court. I was there bandaged and came away. The Court was then closed. The Brahmin in fear came to me and paid me Rs. 30 to settle the case out of court. We had a feast with Rs. 30 for our members in Kidderpur. On the evening of the feast a person, Suren, died of small pox in a house two doors off Sarat's. No one was willing to cremate him; so I, Naren Chatterji, Jotin Pal, Satis Mittra, Sarat, Upendra and

Rajendra Datta took the body to Kewratola ghat at Kalighat for cremation. After that one day Nani sent for me and Suresh and told me to go to Netra and show Suresh the house of Krista Mitter and the *mat* east of our village, and the road by which we were to get there. Suresh and I went and got down on Deula station and went along the railway line to the Nazra bridge between Deula and Netra. Near the bridge is a bazar called Goods shed bazar. We met there a *mahajan* of that bazar and his servant. He asked me where I was going, and I said I was going to Netra where was my home. I showed Suresh the *mat* and the house; he did not want to see the road, and so we returned to Netra station; Jadunath Samadar was then on night duty. He is the Assistant Station Master. He asked me where I had been to. He knew from before that I was a member of the secret society. I told him the truth—that I had come for arranging a dacoity at Netra. I told him because I wanted his help in storing the things at the station. He is a great friend of Boidyanath Banerji, who was a member of our secret society. He was a sympathiser with us, so much so that I thought he was a member; but I do not know for certain. I then returned to Kidderpur and reported to Nani Gopal.

Some time after Tinkori Das, I, Suresh went to Nani's house. There I saw Naren Chatterji, Bhotan Babu, Bhuvan Babu, Ashu (*Pagla*) Banerji, Bimola Deb sitting there. Nani Gopal said to Tinkori he was to get 10 or 12 men from Mozilpur (near Joynagar) for the dacoity. Two or three days later the dacoity was fixed for, and on that very day Chuni Nandi came to Kidderpur at 11 a. m. I, Suresh Mitter, Chuni Lal Nandi, Tinkori Das went to Sibpur and there we found the two men of Santragachi, the two men of Jougacha, Madaru, Bistupada Chatterji (No. 1), Naren Chatterji seated there, and that was the day fixed for the dacoity. Chuni told Nani that the men coming from Mozilpur would be at Magra Hat station, and that they would get into our train at Magra Hat. The two Jougacha men said there was to be a dacoity committed at some other place where there was much money to be got. Nani Babu therefore put off the Netra dacoity and made arrange-

ments for the other dacoity. I can identify the Jougacha men if I see them, and one I have identified. The Santragachi men are Kali Chakravarti and Upen De. Nani told me to fetch poisoned pills from Sarat Mitter. I did so, and gave them to him. I, Chuni Nandi, and Tinkori Das then came away as we were not wanted. Naren Chatterji came back to us the following evening, and Suresh Mitter returned at 9 or 10 p. m. after him. Two or four days after I saw in the papers there had been a dacoity committed at Masarpur. This, I think, was in *Chati*. A few days after Nani Babu sent for me, and I went to Sibpur. That day we arranged for the Netra dacoity. Nani said, "you go by 4-40 train to Magra Hat and get out there, and you will meet the people from Mozilpur-Joynagar, under the over-bridge by the godown platform in front of the station. There are 10 or 12 men. If you see them, telegraph to us at Kidderpur and then Naren and others will follow." He gave me a revolver, 25 cartridges, and Rs. 10. I went off by that train. I had a poisoned pill with me. On arrival I crossed the over-bridge and went below it and stood on the platform. Then Indukiron Bhattacharyya, Chuni Lal Nandi and another, whom I did not know, I saw there. Chuni had a bottle and two small sticks for torches. Seeing there were only three men I did not send a wire, and nothing was done. I saw Chuni, who said he could get no more men. I then returned to Kidderpur. I told Naren Chatterji and the day after I told Nani Gopal. The dacoity then was fixed for another day. A few days after I went with Suresh to Nani's house. He gave us each a revolver, 25 cartridges, and a 10 rupee note, and an extra 10 rupee note between us to buy food. He told us to go to Beliaghata station, where I would find people I knew, who would buy my ticket for me. That day Naren's watch got out of order. There is a watch shop in the lower storey of Kanai Khota's house near Sarat Doctor's house and there I left the watch for repairs. The watchmaker knew me, and I told him I would pay double for repairing the watch within two hours as we were going out on an invitation. I don't know the watchmaker's name. When I went to get the watch I could not pay then, so he wrote my

name in his *khatha* book. The doctor of the homœopathic shop next to where Sarat now lives was sitting there at the time. With the money given for our food I went to the shop of Ramanath or Ramesh in Circular Garden Reach Road near the carriage-stand, and there I got *luchi* and potato curry ; and of a bread shop just by the Muhammadan *musjid* across the road, I bought 21 3-pice loaves from a Muhammadan baker. From other places I got butter and other eatables. I, Suresh and Naren Chatterji then went to Beliaghata. In the tram (which we got into at Kidderpur bridge) the compounder of a dispensary by the side of the dispensary of Gopal Doctor got into the tram at the turn of the Diamond Harbour Road near the dispensary and sat opposite to us. Hari Charan Chogra of Garpara Road, Kidderpur, was also seated there. Hira Charan had taken a contract for tickets at the Corinthian or some other theatre, and he had those tickets for sale with him. The compounder chaffed us seeing our food with us, and said, "where are you taking it ? Give me some." We said, "we are taking it to the Belur *Mât*." We reached Beliaghata station. There we saw Bhutan Mukherji Madaru, Bistupada Chaterji No. 1, three men of Santragachi, two men of Jougacha, Haridas Chakravarti, Soilendra Nath Das, Narendra Nath Bose. Noni had told me not to talk to any one. Bhutan on some pretext would give me my ticket. I saw Bhutan had a bottle and a lantern like constables use at night. He gave me a ticket for Deula. When I got into the train, I saw Debendra N. Ghose, who was a mohurrir, I think, at Sealdah Court and who lives on the bank of the tank belonging to us at Netra, got in. I talked to him, as he asked me where I was going. I said to my brother-in-law's at Baruipur. When I got to Ballygunge I changed my compartment to avoid him. Bhusan Ch. Mitra and Naren Bhattacharji got in the train at Chingripota, I got out at Deula, and so did Soilen Das, Bhutan, Bhusan Mitra, the two men from Santragachi, Haridas Chakravarti and others. We first took the road which goes behind the station and by the side of the rails. By that road we came into the path along the line. Crossing the Nazra bridge by railway line, we then went and sat in the *mât*. This is the *mât* which I had

shown Suresh and which Nani had told me Hem Sen and Tinkori Das had shown. I got the men who came with me to sit down. After 15 minutes Suresh, Madaru and the rest came into the *mât* from the direction of Netra station. Our watch-word was "*Tara*" repeated three times. After half-an-hour from Mozilpur five men came—Tinkori Das, Rajani Bhattacharji, and another man who I heard was the son of Deben Babu, pleader of Diamond Harbour, and another two, whom I could identify if I saw them. They had two rifles, two swords and revolvers with them. All the arms were put down in a heap on the ground. Madaru had brought some masks of light rubber which covered the head, neck and portion of the chest and the upper arms. When I was living at Sarat Mitter's I used to wear a Muhammadan *lungi* and walk about in Kidderpur so dressed and every one knew that I did. I had taken the 21 loaves tied up in that *lungi*. All put on the masks, and each had white canvas boots. Bhutan took my *lungi* and tied it round his head over the mask as a *pugri*. Naren Chatterji took my spectacles which I am wearing now. After the train leaving Diamond Harbour after 11 p.m. had passed Netra station and the moon had gone down (we waited till then, in case during the dacoity any one might telegraph to the police at Diamond Harbour and they should come in that train), we with our daggers cut branches of *babla* trees which were growing in the *mât* and made torches of them. We came through the *mat* to the front of my house, and then went to Kristo Mitra's house and we stood on the road running to east of it. I showed them the house, and pointed out to Naren which room Kristo occupied and which rooms his two brothers occupy. The wall on the eastern side by the road is low—about 6 or $6\frac{1}{2}$ cubits—but shows about 6 feet. Kalipoda Chakravarti and another first scaled the wall and went in. They had a half of a loaf of bread given to each in case any dog should bark. They went inside ; dogs began to bark and then they ceased. They came to the *sudder* door and opened it. There are walls all round. There is also on the east side two *baitakkhanas* and between them the door. Naren gave us each a number (mine was No. 3) when the arms were distributed to us

in the *mat*. The two who had the rifles and the two who carried the swords were to be posted, one with rifle and one with sword in front, and the other two at the back-door behind. One was to walk between the *kirki* and *sudder* door inside the house on guard, and one was to wait going round the house outside from one door to any other. There is a small garden on one side of the *kirki door* and a cattle-shed on the other. Another man was to keep watch between the cow-shed and the *kirki door*. There is a new deep drain running from the cook-room outside the wall, and in that outside the wall I hid myself. After a bit I heard cries of women and children and noise of things being broken. After that, it did not take long. Naren called me saying, "No. 3." I went to him. All went to him. We all collected and returned to the *mat* by the same road. We crossed the *mat* and went through the *khal* over which is the Nazra bridge and went on about 2 or 2½ miles further. Then we prepared a list of the ornaments and money which we got in the dacoity. There was a silver-mounted *hockali* of cocoanut, 7 or 9 *balas* of gold (it was, I know, an uneven number), a pair of gold children's bangles, a waist-band of gold of centipede pattern (*bicha-patta*), a gold necklace (*mala*) of a peculiar pattern (shows pattern (V) with flower ornamentations round). It was a long chain which would reach from the neck to the waist. There was an ordinary gold *har*, and another longer *har* (not one worn tight round the neck). There was a gold watch and chain. There were also silver ornaments. I do not remember anything peculiar about them. There were other gold ornaments, too. There were about Rs. 300 in notes and about Rs. 67 in cash. At the time of the making of the list, I heard from one that in other dacoities, if the *chaukidar* came, his hands and feet were tied, and he was left in that state, but in this dacoity the *chaukidar* came and said "*Kon hai?*" and was told "*Sala bhago,*" and he went away. Naren told me that they did not enter the room of the elder brother of Krista Mitter. I asked, why. He said they feared the *chaukidar* should go the village, and on his information the villagers should come; so we came away quickly. The Mozilpur men took their rifles, swords, some revolvers, and the orna-

ments, cash, lantern, and tied them up in the way a small dead child is carried in *chaddars*, and on the top was my *lungi*. They carried the things thus. They had stolen a big towel from the Mitter's house, and they pulled out a bamboo from the fencing of Srinath Sirkar's garden and the things were tied in the towel with the *chaddars* and my *lungi* on the top, and through the wraps the bamboo was put and the bundle was slung on two men's shoulders. One of the Santragachi men went with them. We all went along the Nazra *khal* up to Magra Hat. On our way we lost our way. I alone knew the way. We heard cries at a house in a village by the road. Two or three went to the house and also asked from the road why they cried. A man had died there. I think the village was Kolush. They showed us the road. After we had left and gone a little distance, they came behind us with the dead body. We hid in a garden till they passed. I think they were Hindus, as they cried *Haribol*. We began our walk till dawn. Naren in the morning then separated us. Soilen Das, Haridas Chakravarti, Bistupoda, one of the Jougacha men, and one of the Santragachi men and I were in one batch. We saw people cutting earth between the village of Sangrampur and Magra Hat in a *mat*. They asked us where we were going. Bistupoda said we are contractors searching for coolies. We reached Magra Hat. In front of the station at a shop we drank *dab*-water. The train which leaves Diamond Harbour at 7-30 a.m. (the third train) came, and we got in, but Suresh Mitra and some with him got in at Sangrampur station. We got out at Beliaghata and went to our respective houses—I to Sarat's. There are no arms in our house at Netra.

(Sd) H. P. DUVAL
30-3-10

READ over to witness in English (where he did not understand, explained in Bengali) and admitted correct.

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY
(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
30-3-10

RECALLED ON 31ST MARCH 1910

Volunteers : I made an omission yesterday about arms at my house. Before I went home to make enquiries about the dacoity to be committed at Netra—this was before Hem Sen spoke of the Netra dacoity—I wanted to go home, and asked for leave from Nani Gopal, but he did not give me leave. So I one day falsely said, as I wanted to go home to Nani Gopal in the presence of many others of our society that we had a gun at home, and I would steal that and bring it to Calcutta. So all my fellows believed my father had a gun, but really he had not. On my return from my enquiry they asked for it, and I said the room was locked up as the family had gone to my *mama's bari*.

On return to Calcutta Naren Chatterji on the same day (a Saturday) returned about 5 P.M. to Kidderpur. I had come back at 11 A.M. He told me he had walked as far as Mullikpur. After that I was sent to Sibpur to report about the dacoity. I went to Nani Gopal's house. I got there, and was told by Bhuban that Bhutan had not come back yet. A little time after, while I was there, he arrived. I returned after telling all the circumstances to Nani. On Sunday afternoon Naren said to me, "you must go to Mozilpur and bring with two or three people from there the money, ornaments, and revolvers." I went by the 3-18 P.M. train from Dhakuria to Magra Hat. There was no water in the *khal* and *dongas* could not ply. So I and a pleader, who is of the family of the Mozilpur Dutts, went by foot. He was not a member of the society. I met him at the station. I did not know him from before. I told him I was going to the house of Satya Kiron Bhattacharyya. His brother, Indu Kiron, was my class friend, and we were fellow-students at the Sibpur College. While crossing the *mt*, I met the Netra School's head master (Paresh Nath Naskar's) nephew, Bankim Ch. Chatterji. He was coming from Durgapur. In the evening I reached Satya's house. I saw Chuni Nandi, Indu Kiron Bhattacharji, and Deben Babu's son, who was in the Netra dacoity, sitting on the *pucca ghat* of the tank in front of the house. There were others there, too. Seeing me, Chuni and Indu took me into the house. Satya,

Indu, Rajani are three *bhais* living together. Indu instructed me to say, if any one asked, that I was his class friend. He had read in the Sibpur College, as a fact. After dusk Chuni took me out for a walk. On going through Moitrganj bazar we came to a garden of Bhupen Dutta on the right side of the road near Chuni's house. Going into the garden we sat on a *pucca ghat*, and he told me that the lantern we had used in the dacoity was in the water on the right side of the ghat—a little way away from the ghat. The tank was a long one with the ghat in the middle. I then returned to Satya Kiron's house. After midnight and our meal Indu and Chuni brought a trunk, and Chuni also brought a big earthen pot—there were eatables in it. Opening the trunk they first put some eatables at the bottom of the *hari*, then they put the ornaments, then some more eatables, and on the top they put *sal* leaves, and with the leaves they closed the mouth of the *hari*. When the box was opened to take the ornaments out I saw there was cotton fleece inside the trunk. The cartridges, revolvers, and the rest of the ornaments were carefully packed in the cotton, so that there should be no sound in moving it. At 2 A.M. I, Chuni, and Rajani went out to go to Baruipur with the box and *hari*. We could not find a *ticca gari* at Jaynagar, and so we walked on. On the road between Jaynagar and Baraset, Jatindra or Jitendra Nath Dutt, son of the late Kedar Dutt, came in a *gari* with some women and children. We met him. Chuni asked him to take us on the roof of the *gari*. The driver and Jiten both refused. We walked up to Baraset. There we hired a *ticca gari*. It was then about 4 A.M., and we drove to Baruipur station. We caught the last morning train for Diamond Harbour, leaving Baruipur after 9 A.M., and coming to Dhakuria. I went intermediate—the *hari* and trunk were not with me. The rest went third class. In the train Sanyasi Ghose of Diamond Harbour was sitting on the bench opposite me. Many were there—*bhadraloks*—and they talked about the Netra dacoity case. Some I knew; they belonged to the Dutt family of Mozilpur and some, I think, to the Chaudhury family of Baruipur. I asked them about the details of the dacoity. From Sanyasi I heard the

police had that day come to Magra Hat from Diamond Harbour to go to Jaynagar. We got down at Dhakuria and hired a *ticca gari*, and at the Kalighat line where the tram goes to Alipur we dismissed it and get into the tram. We did not speak to each other. We got down near Monsatola Lane in Diamond Harbour Road. The trunk was taken from there by me to Sarat Mitter's house. After eating Naren first gave some ornaments and some revolvers to Suresh to take to Sibpur. He also gave me two revolvers and some ornaments, too, to take there. I carried the revolver in the *jangia* which we used to wear. It had a pocket between the legs ; the pocket went right round between the legs. I went to Nani, and there I saw Bhuban and Nani in a room on the top of the *baitakkhana* of *bahir bari*. A list was being prepared of what Suresh had already brought (he was not there). After a little Naren came with other ornaments and revolvers. I left and went to Calcutta and went to Hem Sen's house, and I heard that I had been named as a suspect by the people in whose house the dacoity at Netra had been committed. The next day in the afternoon I was at the shop of Banomali Karmakar, member of our society. When I went I saw Naren and Bhutan seated there and Banomali was melting gold ornaments. A boy assistant of the shop was melting silver ornaments. That night Kumar Krista Bose came to our ioding at Kidderpur. He gave the information that my name was mentioned. I went next day and told Nani Gopal. He told me to come back to him only with my clothes and to burn the canvas boots which Suresh and I wore at the dacoity. I did so. At that time Nani sent a piece of melted gold (so long—shows a little over 1 inch long) to the house at Kidderpur. I, Suresh, and Naren took it. I first took it, and showed it to some *poddars* on the left-hand side of the road leading from Diamond Harbour Road to the Zoo. They would not buy. After that I, Suresh, and Nani went to a Hindusthani shop in Watgunge. I heard from Naren he had formerly worked in that shop. That goldsmith bought the bar. I do not know for how much. I then took my clothes and went to Nani's house at Sibpur. I stayed there a day and from there Paran *alias* Suresh Chandra

Mozumdar took me to a pleader—Kishori Bose, I think, is his name—in Cornwallis Street, near the Shyam Bazar corner. He is a pleader of the High Court. There I was two or three days. One evening Nimai *chogra* living in the Kristnagar direction took me at 11-30 P.M. or so by train to Kristnagar. I there got a *ticca gari*, and was taken to the house of a pleader. His mohurrir, Karu Da, was sleeping on the ground-floor. He knew of my coming, and had bedding and food ready for me. Nimai left. The next evening I was taken by Karu Da to the Arya Chemical works nearby. That house belongs to Paran. I stayed there two or three days. There is a house of the Bholadanga zamindars near the pleader's house, whom I now know to be Lalit Chatterji. There I stayed two or three days and then returned to the Chemical Works. I did this as it was so arranged for me. The zamindar of Bholadanga's younger son is Manmatha Nath Biswas of our society. I used while I was there to go and sit at a coal shop belonging to a *bhadralok* near the zamindar's house. The Brahmin cook and the servants may be able to identify me. While at the Chemical Works, Karu brought a Court amin with one or two *chogras* under him, who works in the mufussil, and Karu arranged for me to work under him. But the day it was fixed I was to begin, a letter came from Calcutta ordering me back. I came back to Sibpur via Sealdah, and stayed in Upen Bhattacharji's house, which has a marble slab with an inscription on it. Then I stayed two days in Bhuban's house. Madaru took me [*Corrects* :]—Madaru while I was staying at Bhuban's took me one day to Laldighi (*i. e.* Dalhousie Square), where at 2 P. M. I met Jotin Dada. I was seated on a bench with trees all round on the Writers' Buildings side. He came there and told me he had arranged for me to go and stay at Rajshahi, and that Satis would meet me that night at Sibpur. I met Satis that night at the Sibpur cremation ghat, whither I had been taken by Madaru, and he took me to 10-1, Musalmanpara Lane. There I saw Bidhu Bhusan Mitra, of Beliasishi, and a man I now know to be Abani Bhusan Chatterji. I was there two days. The day after I went there Abani went to Khulna. Bidhu Biswas and I

went to Bidhu's house at Beliasishi in Nadia. Satis Sarkar then told me my name was to be in future Lal Mohon Chaudhuri, as I had a tattoo "L.M.C." [shows] on my right arm. I stayed at Bidhu's house 10 or 12 days. During that time Bidhu Biswas, Sushil Biswas, Sarat Paramanik, Purna Biswas and some two or three were together one night. I (when I went out to make water) heard the noise of something being poured out into the granary. I went there and saw they had *ballams*, swords, and *lathis*. The next day they went out of the house at 12 or 1 at night with the same weapons. I was not asleep when they returned. They brought back pulse. The next day Susil, Bidhu, and I were out for a walk, and Bidhu showed me a house with some *golas* and said, "this is the house which has been robbed and it belongs to Bipin Pal." I taught in a big *mat* in front of the house sword-play at night to some of the people of village, belonging to our society, e.g., Bidhu, Susil, Sarat, and Purna Biswas ; one also called Ananta and others.

When Bidhu and I came from Calcutta, Bidhu was given revolvers. How many I do not know, but I used one big one for target practice. These were given to Bidhu by Satish Sarkar to be given to the Amalpur people. Amalpur is about five miles off.

One day three *chogras* came from Calcutta. They had bicycles. Bidhu's elder brother, Jodhu (who sympathised with us), used to work near the house of Purna Ch. Biswas, C.I.D. Inspector, two or three miles from Beliasishi. The *chogras* asked him about the movements of Purna, who was then at home. Jodhu used to go there every day. He told them that Purna Biswas came out of his house at 9-30 P.M. to ease himself. One night after eight these three *chogras* went out. They returned very late. They told me that night Purna did not come out. The next day they returned to Calcutta. Two *chogras* from Amalpur came one day to Bidhu's house. They came to fetch the revolvers, and Bidhu told me that these boys had said that Purna Biswas had seen the marks of bicycle wheels round his house, and on that account had kept indoors. Sirish Sirkar is the brother-in-law of Jogin Biswas, and Jogin is a brother of

Bidhu, Sirish came there and heard the *bandobast*, for my and Bidhu's staying at Rajshahi town Sirish told us to go to Rajshahi via Nattore. I, Sirish, and Bidhu went to Nattore. After staying two or three days Bhuban Singh, zamindar of Arail, sent a darwan to Sirish Sirkar to get a private tutor, and Sirish Sirkar put me there as private tutor. I worked there a month and-a-half. While there, I taught the son of Bhuban Singh four hours in all, partly in the morning and partly in the evening. In the intervals I started the Ram Krista Sebak Asram, with the object of collecting men from whom I should select men for our secret society. I used to sit in the *asram* in the middle of the day. Satis Sirkar came to Nattore. Sirish Sirkar went once to Patna while I was at Nattore. Two or four days after he came back with some gold ornaments. Sirish told me they belonged to a lady who was his *dharma* mother, and that in her house Sahan Swami used to live now and again and also Jotin Dada. Satis said, "I am a Nattore man. If any of us go to the *poddar* to have the ornaments melted, we will be caught. So you had better see how to get the ornaments melted." I had initiated one Ghetu Kamar, who lived by the side of Sirish Sirkars' father. He had a blacksmith's shop. I had the ornaments melted by him. The ornaments were made into small bars. For weighing them after melting, I brought scales from a *poddar's* shop almost opposite the dispensary on the pretence of weighing out medicine.

These were about 75 *bharris* and some annas weight of gold, I think, Four *bharris* two annas were bought by Jogen Biswas for Rs. 20 per *tola*. Ghetu Kamar also took three or four *bharris*. Sirish's father took a bigger quantity. The rest, worth Rs. 450, to a *poddar* of Dighapatia, I, Bejoy Chakravarti and Sirish Sirkar took to sell. When it was entered in the *khata* of the *poddar*, I gave my name as Lal Mohon Chaudhuri of Boinchi, Hooghly district; Sirish and Bejoy's own names were written. This was in *Assar*. Sirish, Bejoy, and Jiten Bose's idea was that with the money the secret society should be financed for Nattore. One day Satish Sirkar came from Calcutta. He had five revolvers and some cartridges. When Satish came Bidhu Biswas was

at Nattore. Satish Sirkar told me and Bidhu to go to Rajshahi. I took leave from the zamindar. We went there, and there I had to initiate some *chogras*. Bidhu took me to the house which he said was the mess of the Survey School. Satish told me I should see Bejoy Chakravarti there and was to give the five revolvers he had brought over to him. I went there; after dark Bejoy came to the mess, and I heard from him that he was living at the house of Sarat Babu, head master of the National School.

I gave him the revolvers and cartridges, and the same night I initiated five boys. The next day we returned by the carriage of the Carrying Company to Nattore. On return Satish was still at Nattore. One day we had meeting in the garden house of the *Chota taraf* Raja of Nattore, to decide what we should do. At the meeting there were Satis Sirkar, Bijoy Chakravarti, Jiten Bose, Bidhu Biswas, Manmatha Biswas, Bidhu Sirkar, Sirish Sirkar, Mohini Gossai or Chakravarti—I don't remember who else, if any—then says Bhupendra N. Rai Chaudhuri. We discussed having a dacoity and with the money to assist the organization in Nattore. We also discussed who was to provide arms and who men. Bidhu Biswas said that Sushil Biswas and Sarat Paramanik would join. I said, "this is a new district for these dacoities, and so you ought not to take people not previously experienced in the work." Bidhu said that at Maharajpur dacoity they had shown courage and in the Nattore Mail robbery, so they could be taken. Bidhu said he had seven swords in his house which he would give, and I said that I could supply revolvers, cartridges, and daggers necessary. So they agreed to give me Rs. 500 for getting them. Bidhu was to get Rs. 50 for the expenses of bringing men from Calcutta. I had told them I could give men as well as arms. I, Bidhu, Bijoy, Sirish Sirkar thereupon came to Calcutta. Bijoy stayed at No. 1, Scottish Church Lane. It is where Amherst Street cuts Harrison Road; by the side of it is Pataldanga Street, and by the side of that is Scottish Church Lane. Sirish and Bidhu stayed at No. 10-1, Musalmanpara Lane. I went to Kidderpur to Sarat's house. One day after dusk, taking the Rs. 500, I went

to Nani Gopal's house at Sibpur. On the way I met Bhutan. He told me not to go there direct, as the *chasa* who had been with us to Musarpur dacoity had told everything to the police. I went with Bhutan to a deserted house at Sibpur near Bistupada Chatterji No. 1's house. It was a two-storied house in the middle of a garden. I sat there, and Nani was called. He came. I gave him the money, and said Bidhu Biswas would come and fetch the things, and he would make the arrangements with him. I returned to Kidderpur and saw Bijoy Chakravarty with Naren Chatterji in Sarat's house. Bijoy stayed there the night. The next day we returned in the Assam Mail to Nattore. Bidhu and Sirish got out at Mirpur station. I and Bijoy went on to Nattore, and Bijoy stayed at the dispensary the night with me. Two or four days after Sirish Sirkar and Bidhu came with swords concealed in their beddings from near Mirpur.

Radha Charan Chakravarti, Suren Sircar, and I at times cleaned these swords. Sirish Sircar's father, Girish, got somehow to hear of the swords being brought. He spoke to Bijoy about it rather angrily. We put the swords inside the roof of a corrugated iron shed belonging to a Kabiraj, Jogendra Nath, a member of our secret society. But Bijoy said, "I serve in the Dighapatia Rajbari, and I could keep the arms in the Rajbari storehouse." I got fever at that time, and had it some time before I went to Nattore. I was getting fever, and as Sirish's father was angry about the swords, I went to Bejoy's house for five or seven days. Sirish then advised I should go to Darjeeling for a change.

Radha Charan Chakravarti, after joining our society, had given up his studies ; and because his mother used to scold him, we wanted to get him away, and so we then came to Calcutta. I stayed at 75, Pataldanga Lane. Sachindra Nath Mitra, brother of Phanindra Nath Mitra, printer of the *Jugantar*, was living in that mess. I stayed with him two days. Sirish Sirkar was at 10-1, Musalmanpara Lane, and Radha Charan went to the City College mess at 66, Harrison Road. I then moved to Hindu Great Eastern Hotel, where Mirzapur Street cuts Harrison Road. This was in *Sraban*. Radha Charan also removed there.

I wrote a letter to my father, and he came to the Nebutola High School lodgings. I asked him for my expenses for staying in Darjeeling. He agreed to pay my expenses for two months. Amaresh Kanjilal was staying at the Hindu *Asram* by the side of the Hindu Great Eastern Hotel. I sent a letter through him to Nani Gopal for some money and for my expenses in Darjeeling. He sent me Rs. 60, and he said he would send me money monthly. We then went to Darjeeling—I, Sirish, and Radha Charan. I stayed under the name of Lal Mohan Chaudhuri, and Radha Charan stayed under the name of Dharendra Nath Chaudhuri at the Hindu Great Eastern Hotel. We arrived at Darjeeling and we went to the Sanitarium. This was the end of *Sraban*. There I was one and-a-half or two months. Radha Charan went away after a week. Sirish stayed about a month. I had spent the Rs. 60 in buying warm clothes and for my other travelling expenses, etc. The first week's bill was paid by Sirish Sirkar, and the bill was in his name. I do not know when we arrived in what name Sirish put us down. After the first week the bill was in the name of Lalit Mohan Chakravarti. I get fever again in Darjeeling. I wrote to Nani for money, also to my father who sent me some money—each week Rs. 10 or Rs. 15. Nani never sent me a pice. Jotin Dada once sent me Rs. 10 by money-order, giving his name as Surendra or Rajani. I wrote two or three letters to Nani to Sibpur, as I felt why should I spend my own money, as he paid the expenses of all the others. He never answered my letters. I then began to write to Bejoy. I did not write to my father, but I wrote to my cousin, Satya Jiban Chakravarti, who works in the firm of Balmer Lawrie and who goes home frequently. Bejoy wrote once that the arrangement for a dacoity was complete, and that he initiated eight members at Halsa—a village near Dighapatia. Bidhu Biswas wrote to Sirish Sirkar. This was the letter I took with Amaresh Bhattacharji to Rajat Rai's house. After a bit Sirish left Darjeeling. The day before I was arrested I read, I think, in the papers that there had been a dacoity somewhere. My father used to write letters to me, expressing his grief at my not going home and he came to know I had to go to different places

owing to the Netra dacoity. He wrote to me to leave Darjeeling and surrender myself to the Magistrate of Diamond Harbour. Bijoy had written to me that Nani, though he gives me no money, was giving money to others. He wrote, too, that gold bangles had been made out of the society's money for Naren Chatterji's wife. I thought it strange that money obtained by dacoity and stolen from the person of a lady should be used for personal expenses of the members and for making ornaments for a woman. This disturbed my mind, and I thought I would give up my connection with the society and surrender and tell the Magistrate of Diamond Harbour. I wrote my father for money; he wrote he would send the money in two or three days' time. Within that time I was arrested. I used to go out for walks on the Mall. A *bhadrolok* I got to know. He told me he was a relation of Benoy Krista Deb Bahadur. He used to come often and stay at the Sanitarium talking to me. A *chogra* from Calcutta came to the sanitarium. He one day told me he had no brothers. On the day before I was arrested he told me that his brothers had come to Darjeeling and would go from here to Diamond Harbour for a change. He asked my father's name and address. I suspected he was an informer of the C. I. D. Satis Gupta told me (he shared my room) that Chandi Charan Chatterji, a C. I. D. Inspector, was in Darjeeling and I was being shadowed, so I had better fly. I and the *bhadrolok* and B. L. Mitter's brother's son went to Jalapahar for a walk. Some Gurkhas, when we came over the Darjeeling station, called me by name. I went to them. After a bit Chandi Das Mukherji came up to me, and the Gurkhas showed me a paper which I read and saw was a warrant. I found the *bhadrolok* I met on the Mall was a C. I. D. Inspector. My things were taken from the Sanitarium. I was taken to the thana. I told all I knew to Chandi Das Mukherji about the Netra affair. After that I told what I remembered then to Mr. Daly, also giving the names of some members of the society. I was sent to Diamond Harbour. There I confessed to the Netra dacoity and other things. I made two separate statement. I mentioned briefly all I have mentioned here (statements shown

and the signature on each page identified by the witness). The Magistrate read it over to me and I found it correct and then signed. I was kept in custody at Diamond Harbour, and from there N. Sen, Deputy Magistrate, brought me by steamer to Calcutta, and I then stayed at 111, Lower Circular Road, under the guard of 12 police.

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

31-3-10

READ over to witness in English and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

31-3-10

RECALLED ON 1ST APRIL 1910

OUR three objects—collection of money, men and arms. For the purpose of collecting money our scheme was to commit dacoity. Our idea was that we would collect enough money by committing dacoities on the people of country; and when we had enough so, to buy arms, then to give up dacoity, and to loot Government treasuries and banks. Another proposal was to coin money. I, Suresh Mitra, and Naren Chatterji learnt coining money, but I had no time after I had to go to Netra dacoity, and after that to hide myself. A Musalman of Kidderpur came to our house, *i.e.*, Sarat Mitra's, with one Rakhal Das of Kidderpur—of Ghat Manjhi's Lane—to teach us. The Musalman lived in a hired house in Ekbalpur. I know both their houses. He had a big sort of letter-copying press and he had two brass rings. He had white stones ground down like flour, and he had iron also ground down. He mixed them together with *gur*, which was boiled quite thick. The *gur* is the *gur* used with tobacco. He put one of the rings with the mixture into the press; then he put a rupee on the top of it to make the impression. He put the mixture on the top of that again and put the other ring over that. Then he pressed it all down with the letter press by turning the screw. He then removed the

rings and the mould and put the whole into the fire. When it cooled, the rings remained with the moulds and the rupee was taken out. Many of such moulds were made. He made five or six moulds. He said 2,000 or 3,000 rupees could be made from each. After the removal of the rupee, the two moulds so made were put together, and a small hole was there with two screws for joining the two together. Through the hole melted silver used to be put. I myself prepared two or five rupees. They were quite like real rupees. I heard Rakhal Das was charged by the police with coining in this way, but he, after a long trial, was acquitted.

At initiation, too, each member had to pay Rs. 5. With the money thus obtained, shops were opened in the districts where there was a big town or village. Such shops were at Kristanagar—the Arya Chemical Factory, at Calcutta, the *Chatra Bhandar*, at Midnapore, the *Chatra Bhandar*, at Boinchi the *Devi Bhandar*, at Sibpur the *Swadeshi* Store, at Nattore there was a shop ; it is there no longer, at Benares the *Swadeshi Sammilani*, and at Kidderpur the *Swadeshi Silpaniketan* now no longer in existence and the shop of Bonomali Poddar. I heard that there were two *poddars*, too, in Bara Bazar, Calcutta. I had been to them once or twice with Bonomali. The “City Press” of Panna Lal De at Kidderpur was also one of our shops.

For collecting men we first opened public *samitis*. We also went about with magic lanterns. The police arrested many on suspicion, and so we gave that up and started *asrams* in the name of Ram Krishna Paramahansa, e.g., one was opened at Nattore. There was one, too, at Amalpur, called *Anath Asram*. In the public *samitis* the members met, and the members of the secret society met with the members of the *samitis* and found out suitable men for our work. Charu Ghose, of Chetla, from a shop there belonging to one Nur Khan or some such name (I know the shop ; I have been to it with Charu more than once) used to get revolvers and cartridges. There is a *chogra*, whose house is at Rajpur or Chingripota, and who stayed at Ghat Manjhi’s Lane, Kidderpur, and he used to get revolvers

and cartridges from *Khalasis* who had been to distant countries. I know this, as I used to get these from his men, and he told me. When I was at the *Chatra Bhandar* revolvers, cartridges, and daggers came from Jaypur, Bombay and such places in the goods which came for sale. I once saw a package of plates, etc., of marble came there, and in it were two or three revolvers. We also used to send out revolvers with goods, e.g., in a biscuit box ; a few biscuits were removed and cartridges put in. I have seen such sent to the *Debi Bhandar* at Boinchi and the *Chatra Bhandar* at Midnapore. I once with Rabindra Nath Deb Rai went to Chandni into a *gali* to a shop (it was in a *gali* on the left side branching off from Dharamtala Street to the north and to the Sealdah side of the bazar). The shop is Ashutosh Datt's. There we got something packed in a "Statesman." We had a

Shows packing like the English way of packing a book, but says he used a large amount of paper. (Sd.)
H. P. DUVAL.

special mode of packing, so that no one could find out what was inside. Indra Nandi once sent me to Laldighi. There I bought cartridges and a revolver from some Musalmans who were waiting there for me. I knew them from before, as they often came to Indra Nandi's place.

These Musalmans, I believe, worked in a Sahib's shop. The Sibpur dacoity was in April. I think the Maniktola people were arrested in April. I can't say whether it was before or after.

After my arrest I stayed at Circular Road. After arrival at Calcutta from Diamond Harbour, I stayed in the steamer about four days before I went to Lower Circular Road with N. Sen. I went with N. Sen to various places and afterwards with a Sub-Deputy Magistrate, S. P. Ganguli. I showed them the places and took them there, and I, of my own free will, told them the names and places and particulars relating to them. I showed them the houses of members of the secret society and the places to which I myself went and the place of occurrence at Netra and Moshat and the places where I had been in hiding after the Netra dacoity. In Calcutta and Kidderpur, I showed in Dharamtala Street the house of a member ; in Wellington Lane, the house of a member ; in Nebutola Lane, the house of a member in Amherst Street, Champatala Lane, College Street, Champa-

tala 1st Lane, Protap Chatterji's Lane, houses of members ; in Mirzapur Street, College Square, Musalmanpara Lane (is a mess), Pataldanga Street and Lane, Sitaram Ghose's Street Mechua Bazar, Bechu Chatterji's Street, Badur Bagān, Mukta-ram Babu's Street, Sukea's Street, Cornwallis Street, Than-thania, Durga Charan Mukerji's Lane, off Grey Street, Ram Dhone Mitter's Lane, Bhawani Ch. Dutt's Street, Fordyce Lane, I showed houses and messes where members lived. Kishori Babu Vakil's house is in Cornwallis Street. I showed the Deputy that house.

I went to Sekhrapara Lane, to show the house of a member, Bepin Ganguli.

To go to Probash De, M.A.'s house one goes from Bow Bazar down Durga Ch. Mitter's Lane, and then into another *gali*. [*Corrects* :]—It is not Durga Charan Mitter's Lane, but Durga Ch. Pituri's Lane.

I showed in Jhamapukur Lane two houses where Soilen Das and where another, whose name I do not know, had stayed. He was of Eastern Bengal. Gonesh Das lived with Soilen Das.

I showed the house of Prosanta and Probash Mitter's and the house of Narain Das in Sukea's Street.

In Kidderpur I showed in Nur Mohammad Ghat Manjhi Lane, Manshatala Lane, Garpara Road, Diamond Harbour Road, Munshigunge Road, Watgunge Road, members houses. In Sibpur I showed the houses of members. I do not know the roads. I pointed out the place in the lines at Alipur where I had given money. I pointed out Charu's house at Chetla.

On the Diamond Harbour side I showed in Kalikapur, Barui-pur, Mozilpur, Joynagar, Diamond Harbour, Netra, Kuleswar, the places of occurrences, where we practised shooting, etc., and the houses of members. I also pointed out the place, two miles from the goods shed near Nazra *khal*, where we had made the list of the loot taken at Netra ; also the field where we stopped before that dacoity. As to the places I showed to the Magistrates they made notes, which were read over to me and I signed them. I showe a tank at Sibpur. When I stayed a day at Nani's after the Netra dacoity, on that day Bhutan or Bhuban

brought a watch and a ring of keys there. Nani was sitting in his father's big *baitakkhana* with me and Bhuban. First there was a talk of sending back the ring of keys to Netra. It was decided not to do so. Nani Gopal took the keys out and kept the ring and gave the keys and watch to Bhuban. It was proposed to throw them into the tank near Nani's house first, and then it was determined to throw them into the tank I showed the Magistrate. I showed the Magistrate the Botanical Garden in which people were initiated.

I have identified some of the accused. I gave information about Taranath Rai Chaudhuri. I have not seen him since I have been arrested. I showed the Magistrate Taranath's house in Benares. I showed the Magistrate all the places I had been to. I identify my signatures in the verification statements. I identify Mr. N. Sen, the Magistrate, with whom I went—also Babu Sati Prasad Ganguli, the Sub-Deputy Magistrate.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY

1-4-1910

READ OVER to witness in English and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

1-4-1910

*RECALLED AT THE SUB-JAIL HOWRAH, ON
SOLEMN AFFIRMATION*

(In the presence of accused Nani Gopal Gupta, Bhuban Mukerji, Bistupada Chatterji, Jogesh Mitra, Narendra Nath Bose, Charu Chandra Ghose, Hem Chandra Sen, Jotindra Nath Mukerji, Sibhu Hazra, Atul Pal, Indu Kiron Chakravarti, Chuni Lal Nandi, Sarat Mitra, Bimola Deb and Haripada Adhikari.

I CAN identify men among those before me.

I do not identify these two shown me (Sibhu Hazra and Haripada Adhikari).

I identify this man [shows]. He is Jatin Dada and this an Hem Chandra Sen.

I know Jatin Dada. I have seen him at Laldighi. I also saw him in Darjeeling. He never did any work with me, but I remember he met me at the Laldighi before I went to Beliasishi. I have stated before about this.

Hem Sen I know. His home is Netra. I have told about him. I never did any work with him. I have given all particulars about him. I have known him from my childhood.

This man [shows] is Bhuban Babu. This man, I do not know his name, I know, but I have seen him at Nani Gopal Babu's house at Sibpur. [The man is Atul Pal.]

Bhuban Babu I know for the last two years. He lives at Shibpur, and I showed his house to Mr. Sen. I went to his house and stayed there two days after the Netra dacoity, when I came back from Krishnagar. I saw him also at Nani Gopal's house many times. He was in all our counsels. I met him, too, at the Botanical Gardens for initiating people. I never went out with him on a dacoity nor saw him go out on dacoity. He knew all about the Netra dacoity. When I returned with the ornaments, I saw him there.

The other man [Atul Pal], whose name I do not know, I have seen at Nani's house on some occasions—more than once. I can't say how often. I can't say what he was doing. Other members of our society were present there.

I know all the rest.

This is Jogesh Chandra Mitter *alias* Madaru, and this is Bistupada Chatterji, No. 1.

I had seen Jogesh at Indra Nandi's house, and very often afterwards. I have known him two years. He used to visit Indra Nandi. I often saw him at Nani Gopal's. He went with us to the Netra dacoity and to Moshat. I have already mentioned all other particulars.

Bistupada also went with me to the Netra dacoity. I have seen him at Nani Gopal's. I showed his house at Sibpur to the Magistrate.

I identify this man. He is Charu Chandra Ghose, and this man Bimola Ch. Deb.

Charu Chandra Ghose's house I have often been to, when I

stayed with Sarat Doctor. I showed his house to the Magistrate. I brought cartridges and revolvers from his house, and I went target-practising with him. I also got revolvers from his office. I have known him from the end of 1908. I have told all about him before.

I have seen Bimola. He lives at Kidderpur. I showed his house to the Magistrate. I have known him since I lived at Indra Nandi's house. He used to visit him. I have seen him also at Sarat Mitter's and Nani Gopal's house. He, Pabitra Dutta and others sent me to Dacca to Sarat Gupta's house, as I have told before.

I identify this man. He is Chuni Lal Nandi, and this man Nani Gopal Gupta.

I knew Chuni Lal Nandi first at the Bhawani Charan Lane mess from the time I lived there. I have known him about four years. I was with him in bringing the ornaments looted at Netra back from Joynagar. He lives at Joynagar, and I showed his house to the Magistrate.

I have known Nani Gupta since 1908. I have said all about him. I worked under him and obeyed his orders. All I did was under his orders. From the end of 1908 till after the Netra dacoity, up to the time I went to Darjeeling, what I did I did under his orders. I have given full particulars. His house is at Sibpur. I showed his house to the Magistrate. All I have named as working with them were under his orders.

I identify this man (Indu Kiran Bhattacharji), and this man (Narendra Nath Bhattacharji). [The man he identifies as Narendra Nath Bhattacharji says his name is Kalipada Chakravarti, of Serampore.]

[Lalit then says he does not recognise the second man.] It is not Naren Bhattacharji. I do not know him.

I went to Indu Kiran's house to bring the ornaments from there after the Netra dacoity. He lives at Mozilpur. I never saw him at Calcutta, Sibpur or Kidderpur. I first saw him at the bridge at Mogra Hat station on the day the Netra dacoity was put off. I know his name by hearing people say it. He was living in his house when I brought the ornaments from

there. I have already given particulars. I knew a man Narendra Nath Bhattacharji. I only saw him once.

I identify this man, Dr. Sarat Chandra Mitra, and this man Narendra Nath Bose.

I lived at Sarat Mitter's from the end of 1908. I have shown it to the Magistrate. I have given all other particulars about him before.

I saw Narendra Nath Bose since I went to live at Indra Nandi's house. I went with him to the Netra dacoity. We were at Benares together. On the day I took the letter, after Indra hurt his hand, I took a letter to this Naren Bose. I do not know when he returned to Calcutta after having a shop at Benares. He afterwards went to the Netra dacoity. All those I have identified are members of our secret society. Some I have known to be members for four years, some for two, and some for one year. The places I took the Magistrates to, I took them myself. They did not know them before.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

[WITNESS asked to see the first two men again.] He says this man (pointing to Sibū Hazra) I saw once at Nani Gopal's house, having a conversation with him about the Morehal dacoity and about his experiences in jail. The other (Haripada) I do not know. Nani spoke to this man (Sibū) about the poisoned pills. This man spoke of the way he was tortured in jail about the dacoity, and Nani said, "for that reason I have made *bandabast* about the poisoned pills for anyone wounded to take them, so as to escape being caught."

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

9-4-10

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY

READ over to witness and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

Lalit Mohan Chakravarti

(on solemn affirmation) 11th April 1910

[In presence of the following accused :—Lalit K. Chatterji, Poran Mazumdar, Nibaran Chandra Mazumdar, Bhuban Mukherji, Harendra Nath Banerji, Haridas Chakravarti, Rajani Bhattacharji, Tinkori Das, Sris Chandra Sarkar, Narendra Nath Bhattacharji, Bhosan Chandra Mitter, Suresh Chandra Mitter, Satish Chandra Mitter, Dasarathi Chatterji, Kalipada Chakravarti, Pulin Mitter, and Manmatha Rai Chowdhury.]

I IDENTIFY this man. His name is Satish Chandra Mitter of Kidderpur. His home is at Baikantapur near Sonarpur. I have known him from the end of 1908. He never went out with me on dacoity. He was in the house of his elder brother, Sarat Mitter, at Kidderpur. He lived at Baikantapur, and came from time to time to Kidderpur. I know him as a member of our secret society. He knew all about our affairs, but he gave us no advice.

I do not know this man (Manmatha Nath Chaudhuri)

I know this man. He is Haridas Chakravarti, also called Sivendra ; and this man, he is Bhusan Chandra Mitra. From 1909 I have known Sivendra. I myself initiated him into our society at the house of Sarat Mitter at Kidderpur. He was with me in the Netra dacoity. He was with me, too, at the Kuleswar target practice. He lives at Sitaram Ghose's Street in Calcutta. I had been to his house, and I showed it to Mr. Sen. I have already told all about him.

I have known Bhusan from 1908. He was with me in the Netra dacoity. He lives at Changripota, or Chingripota, I do not know his house. I met him first at Sarat Mitter's house. He was in Nani Gopal's society. He worked in the Royal Insurance office in Calcutta. I have already told all else I know about him.

I know this man. He is Karu Dada *alias* Nibaran Chandra Mazumdar. After I went to Kristnagar after the Netra dacoity, I first went to the house of a vakil, whose name I did not know then, but now I know. This man was his clerk. The *chogra*,

who took me from Calcutta, took me to him to the vakil's house. He was then sleeping in the lower room. I knew him as a member of our society. When I was staying at Arya Chemical Factory, he went to Nani Gopal's. He spent of the money I had at Kristnagar a part, and when I had to return, he came to Calcutta to get money for me from Nani Gupta for my journey back. He took a return ticket to Calcutta. On his return he did not give up his ticket, and I saw him give it to some one—I can't say whom—in my presence. Nani Gopal afterwards told me he had been to Calcutta.

I identify this man—Rajani Bhattacharji. I do not identify this man (Dasarathi Chatterji).

I first saw Rajani on the day of the Netra dacoity at the Netra *mat*. He came from Mozilpur, where he lived. I came to know afterwards he lived there, and I showed his house to Mr. Sen. On the Sunday following the Friday on which the dacoity took place, I went to his house to fetch back the *loot* from the dacoity. He was a member of our society, otherwise he could not have been in the dacoity. He came back with me with the ornaments, etc., to Sarat Mitter's house at Kidderpur. I have told how I went to Mozilpur and met a vakil on the way.

I know these two men. This man, I do not know his name, lives at Santragachi. He was in the Netra dacoity with me, and I think he went with us to Moshat, but I do not know his name. I, after the dacoity at Netra, went to Upen De's house at Santragachi and at his house I saw him, and the day after that he and I went about together seeing the places round and a large *thakur* called Ram Raja. He went in the evening with me to Nani's house. (The man so named says his name is Pulin Behari Sirkar, of Jougacha, thana Santragachi.)

This other man is Siris Chandra Sirkar, of Nattore. I came to know him from the time I went to Sarat Mitter's. After the Netra dacoity, I went to his house at Nattore. His father is Girish Chandra Sirkar, doctor. I have said already all about him. I stayed with him at Nattore before a warrant was issued against me and again after the warrant was issued, too. I

showed his house to Mr. S. P. Ganguli. He is a member of our society.

I know this man. I did not know his name. I know this
Lalit Kumar man. He is Poran—I think Mazumdar.
Chatterji.

This man, whose name I do not know, lives at Kristnagar. He is a pleader. I saw him at Nani Gopal's house in 1909. I saw him once or twice there. I saw him one of the many times I went to Nani's house from Kidderpur. He was talking to him. I saw him in his house afterwards after the Netra dacoity in his house at Kristnagar. I never had any conversation with him. I was in his house a day and-a-half, but did not speak to him. After the warrant was issued, I was taken to Kristnagar and was first kept in that house. I know his name now to be Lalit Mohan Chatterji. I never saw him at any other place. I showed his house to Mr. Sen. When I was at the Chemical Factory I was told by Haradhan Banerji or Mukherji, whom I knew at Sibpur and whose residence is at Kristnagar and is a member, that Lalit was a member.

I know Poran, as I first saw him frequenting the *Chatra Bhandar*. I also saw him in Nani Gopal's house. He took me, after the issue of the warrant, from Nani's house to the house of Kishori Babu, a High Court Pleader, in Cornwallis Street. I have already said all else I know about him.

I know this man, he is Bhutan Babu; and this man, Harendra Nath Banerji or Mukherji. (Says his name is Harendra Ch. Banerji, of Bikrampur).

Bhutan's house is at Sibpur, I have known him since I went to Indra Nandi's house. He was in the Moshat dacoity and the Netra dacoity. I have said all about him before. I showed his house to Mr. Sen.

Harendra lives, I think, in Dacca at Bikrampur. I first saw him when we lived together at Indra Nandi's house. I never saw him at any dacoity. I spoke about him before. He was on a magic-lantern excursion with me, and went recruiting members with me.

I know this man, He is Tinkori Das, of Mozilpur.

Accused says his name is Kalipada Chakravarti, son of Hem Chander, of Jougacha. I know this man. He is one Kali, of Santragachi.

I was with Tinkori Das at Indra Nandi's house. He sometimes stayed there. He was with me in the Netra dacoity. All I have said about him before.

Kali went to Moshat with us and he was also with us in the Netra dacoity. I never went to his house. I saw him at Bepin De's house at Santragachi, and at Nani Gopal's house at Sibpur.

I know this man. I do not know his name. He was with me at the Netra dacoity. I think he lives at Jaynagar. I never saw his house. I only saw him once in the Netra *mat*. Only I saw him once at night and so I could not identify him before

Mr. Ganguli. Now, too, I am uncertain if this man was at the dacoity. A Narendra Nath Bhattacharji, of Chingripota, was, I heard, there. This I heard from some one at Kidderpur.

This other man is Suresh Ch. Mitter, of Baikantapur. He lives with his *bhai*, Sarat, at Kidderpur. He went to Moshat, and the Netra dacoities with me. He also went to the Musarpur dacoity. I was not in it, but I have explained already how I knew he went there.

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

READ over to witness and admitted correct.

(Sd) H. P. DUVAL.

Lalit Mohan Chakravarti on solemn affirmation.

[Recalled on 28th April 1910 in presence of Jatindra N. Hazra and Sushil Biswas.]

I IDENTIFY this man only (Sushil Biswas). His name is Sushil Biswas of Beliasishi. After the Netra dacoity I stayed in his house there 10 or 12 days. I showed his house to the Magistrate. I have already told all else I knew about him.

At Howrah Sub-Jail.

[In presence of Bijoy K. Chakravarti. Bhupendra N. Banerji, Manmatha N., Narendra N., Bidhu Bhusan Biswas, Sailendra N. Das, Kiron Ch. Rai, Gonesh Ch. Das, Sailendra N. Chatterji, Upendra K. Dey, and Atul Ch. Mukherji.]

I know this man (Bijoy K. Chakravarti). He is Bijoy Chakravarti. He lives at Dighapati. He worked
Convict. in the Raj Estate. I have told the Court about him before. I showed Sati Babu his house.

I do not know this man (Bhupendra N. Banerji, of Jaynagar.)

I know this man (Monmatha N. Biswas). He is Monmatha Biswas. He belongs to Nadia district. I do not know his village. I saw him at Natore at Sirish Sirkar's house I have said all about him before.

I do not know this man (Narendra N. Biswas).

I know this man (Bidhu Bhusan Biswas). He is Bidhu Biswas, of Beliasishi. I was at his house, and have already said all about him.

I know this man (Sailendra K. Das). He is Sailendra N. Das. I do not know his house. I saw him at
Convict. the mess at Jhamapukur, and he went to the Netra dacoity with us, and I said all about him before.

I know this man (Kiran Ch. Rai). He is Kiran Rai, of Chetla. I saw him at Chetla at Charu Ghose's
Convict. and at Sarat's at Kidderpore. I have said all else about him before.

I know this man (Gonesh Ch. Das). He is Gonesh Das. I used to see him when I stayed with Indra
Convict. Nandi. I have known him since then. He stayed there too. All else, I have said before about him.

Convict. I do not know this man (Sailendra N. Chatterji).
I know this man (Upendra Kr. De). I know him now. He lived at Santragachi. I showed his house to Mr. Sen. I knew it from before, as I have been to his house. I
Convict. went with him to the Netra and Moshat dacoities. I know him now to be Upen De.

I know this man (Atul Ch. Mukherji). I do not know his name, but I think he lives in Howrah (Khurut). I have seen him

at Nani's house. He went with us to the Netra and Moshat dacoities. I identified both of them at Kristnagar Jail.

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY.

READ over to witness in English and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
28-4-10.

Lalit M. Chakravarti, Prosecution Witness No. 1, on 15th June 1910, on solemn affirmation.

I IDENTIFY Taranath Rai Chaudhury, Pabitra Chandra Dutt, and Annoda Prosad Kabiraj. I do not identify the other four (Ramapada, Bibhuti Bhusan, Kristapoda and Prokriti).

I have known Tarak since 1906. He lived in Raja's Lane. I often visited him when I was staying with Indra Nandi. He was last with me at Benares. Pabitra I have known since I was first at Indra Nandi's and at the *Jugantar Chattra Bhondar* mess.

I have known Annoda, too, since I was at Indra Nandi's. I have told about these men before in my evidence.

Cross-examined—I think the Congress in Calcutta was at the end of 1906 or beginning of 1907.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
15-6-10

READ over to witness in presence of above accused and admitted correct.

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY.
15-6-10

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL.
15-6-10

Lalit M. Chakravarti, Prosecution Witness No. 1, recalled on 30th June 1910, on solemn affirmation.

I do not know this man. I have heard of him—he is Bhu-
pendra Narain Rai Chaudhury—from Bidhu Biswas, Manmatha
Biswas, and Sushil Biswas, when I was at Beliasishi. I heard

his name in this court first, and so know who he is. I was present when others identified him.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY

30-6-10

READ over to witness and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

30-6-10

Lalit Ch. Chakravarti, Witness No. 1, recalled on 11th July 1910, *on solemn affirmation*.

I IDENTIFY this man Kartik Dutt. I have known him since I have been in Indra Nandi's house. He was at Annoda Kaviraj's and at the *Jugantar* office, and I often went to him in connection with the work of the secret society.

No cross-examination.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

11-7-10

(Sd.) L. M. CHAKRAVARTY.

READ over to witness and admitted to be correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

I HAVE heard Counsel in this case and have read a statement made by the accused, Jotindra N. Hazra, before the District Magistrate of Howrah, and I consider that it is necessary for the ends of Justice to obtain the evidence of the said Jotindra N. Hazra, who is directly concerned in, and privy to, the offences under sections 121, 121 (A), 122, 123 and 400, Indian Penal Code, now under enquiry before me, and which offences are all made exclusively triable by the High Court under Act XIV of 1908.

I hereby do tender pardon to the said Jotindra Nath Hazra, on condition of his making a full and true disclosure of the whole of the circumstances within his knowledge relative to the offences mentioned above.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

12-4-10

THE above order being explained to the accused, Jotindra N. Hazra, and he having accepted it on condition mentioned, I discharge him and direct that he be examined as a witness in this case.

It is further ordered that Jotindra N. Hazra be detained in custody until the termination of the trial at the High Court.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
12-4-10

EXHIBIT 69

High Court Criminal No. (M) 85 Old No. (M) 84.

(Form for recording confessions.)

(C. O. No. 2 of 1st March 1901,)

Statement of accused persons.

(Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.)

THE statement of Sailendra Kumar Das, age about 18 years, made before me, J. A. Ezechiel, District Magistrate of the 1st class, at Krishnagar, on the 9th day of March 1910, in the English Language recorded in Krishnagar Jail.

My name is Sailendra Kumar Das. My father's name is Akhoy Kumar Das. I am by caste Kayastha, and by occupation student. My home is at mauza Lonsing, thana Palong, district Faridpur. I reside at Krishnagar Jail.

At the end of the year 1906 I was first initiated into a secret society by one Ram Das Chakravarti of Bankura. While I was initiated there were about 10 or 12 other members initiated before me. The president of our secret society at Bankura was Surendra Nath Mukerji, son of late Harihar Mukerji. I now name the initiated members : 1. Raj Mohon Mukharji, brother of Surendra Mukharji, 2. Nirmala Prasanna Mukharji, 3. Bijay Chandra Aish, 4. Barendra Krishna Rai, 5. Gokul Behari Mitter, 6. Gokul Kaviraj, and 7. Haripada Banerji. I don't remember all the names now. I can identify all of them.

I asked Ram Das Babu who is doing all these things. He said that one Jotindra Nath Banerji, Debabrata Bose and Indra

Nath Nandi were the origin of this secret society. There was a wrestling club of which Ram Das was the captain. It was started for recruiting members. Our society had connection with the main society of Baren Ghose in Calcutta and the Midnapore society. Nirmala Prasanna Mukharji was the secretary of the wrestling club. Once Satyendra Nath Bose of Midnapore wrote to Ram Das Chakravarti asking him to send two reliable persons as he wanted to teach them explosives. I was not initiated then. As no reliable men could be had then he wrote to Satyen Bose that he would send the men as soon as he could get them. After my initiation, under the instruction of Ram Das, Nirmala wrote to Satyen Bose saying he could send one man now ; but he replied that he did not require the men now. Ram Das had an *alias*—Devi Kinkar. He used to stay with Surendra Nath Mukerji in their shop known as Bharat Bhandar. Letters for Ram Das were addressed to the name of Devi Kinkar. People used to come from Calcutta and Ram Das used to visit Midnapore and Calcutta. They used to stop at Bharat Bhandar.

The form of initiation was different from that in force now. The main portion of it was in Sanskrit. When I was initiated I had to sit on something like a mat. I held a "Gita" in my left hand and a sword in my right. Ganges water was sprinkled over my body. I had to read out three times the clauses of the oath of initiation before a picture of Kali. A wooden fire was burning in front of me. There was also a picture of Sivaji in front of me. Ram Das Babu had a gun and we used to practise shooting with this gun in the jungle close to the town. Haripada Banerji had a D. B. B L. gun belonging to his father. We practised target shooting. In order to become hardy we used to go on excursions. We used to run two or three miles in the sun or climb a hill. There is a hill named Sushna, about 14 miles from the town. We used to go there. Ram Das said that they had two fortresses—one at Hansadanga, and another at Chanda Pathuri. People used to come from Calcutta to get their training in shooting at these places, and they used to stop there for months. The Raja of Ambikanagar

was also a member of our society. I did not see him take part in anything, but I know he was a member. Other members were initiated after me : 1. Amulya Chandra Bhattachariya of Bishnupur, 2. Abhoya Pada Mallik of Bishnupur where we had a branch club, the leader being Baikunta Nath Sen, pleader, and Sujoy Chandra Das, pleader. 3. Nalinikanta Rai of Jibta, 4. Charu Chandra Biswas of Gopalnagar, 5. Khitish Chandra Chakravarti of Lego, 6. Chandi Charan Banerji of Tajpur, 7. Jugal Kishore Banerji, third year student of the Veterinary College, 8. Sarajendra Krishna Deb of Calcutta, 9. Baikanta Behari Mitra, 10. Sailendra Nath Ghose of Bankura, 11. Mohindra Nath Ghosh and 12. Ahindra Nath Ghose of Kotalpur. Nos 5 and 12 were initiated by Chandra Kanta Chakravarti who visited Kotalpur in the end of 1907. I cannot remember all the names. I can identify all of them.

Ram Das Babu and other members used to visit the Bishnupur men almost every week and give them instructions.

In the end of the year 1907 there were about 22 or 23 looting cases on the borders of the Bankura and Hooghly districts ; the main object of these people being to burn Manchester cloths. The leaders of this gang were Nalinikanta Rai, his brother Sajini Kanta Rai, Kishori Mondal, Amrita Lal Rai, Gyanendra Nath Chatterji and Jogendra Nath Chakravarti, late Pundit of the Kuchiakol High English School.

Though I was not in that party I heard everything from my Kotalpur friends, and Nalini. Nalini had about 30 or 40 long black coats, which they wore as their uniform when they went looting shops. Almost all the grown-up students of the Kotalpur and Kuchiakol Schools used to go with the party. Nalini has got about 20 or 25 swords.

In one case when they were burning the Manchester cloths of a shop in Kotalpur, close to the thana, the Sub-Inspector, Pratap Chandra Mozumdar, came forward to arrest them, but Sajini struck him with a *lathi* on his wrist and broke two or three of his fingers. In that case Chandi Charan Banerji was very conspicuous. In another case at Brahmanari they had to retreat as the members of the shop pelted them with stones

from the roof of the building. One stone fell on the head of Bhabendra Nath Ghosh of Deshra and made a small fracture. They went there a second time and caused damage to the extent of about Rs. 4,000. I heard Ahindra Nath Ghosh once wrote to Gyanendra Nath Chatterji, saying that he would bring men from Kuchiakol and asking Gyanendra to bring his own men. But that letter never reached Gyanendra, as the bearer, by mistake, delivered it to another of the same name.

Nalini had a horse pistol. They used to take with them a muzzle-loading gun, a few swords and *lathis*. Ram Das wrote to Nalini, suggesting that they should stop looting for the present. So there were no further occurrences.

In November 1908 I left Kotalpur for Calcutta. There I met Ganesh Chandra Das, an old friend of mine, with whom I read in the Tamluk Hamilton School. He asked me to become a member of his society. Ganesh was a member of the Midnapore society, which is a branch of Baren Ghose's society. He asked me to prepare a list of men who were ready to join our society. I prepared the list. He introduced me to Harendra Chandra Banerji, an old member of his society. One morning Haren Banerji took me to the Botanical Gardens, where I was again initiated by Nonigopal Gupta of Sibpur, the leader of the society. I said I had already been initiated in Bankura. He asked me to see the men whose names I had put in the list, and find out whether they were ready to work. He also asked me to bring the ablest man, with whom he might communicate directly. I went to Bankura in the beginning of 1909 and found all of them ready to work. I brought with me Ram Das Babu, but Noni Babu did not like him, and he asked me to find another man. Then I met Sakha Singha Sen, son of Mr. C. K. Sen, Barrister-at-law, Bankura, who had started a sweetmeat shop on the Chitpore Road in front of the Nutan Bazar. I introduced him to Harendra Banerji, and I cannot say what happened to him afterwards. He is not in Calcutta now. He has been appointed Head Master in some school in Chapra district.

Some time after my coming to Calcutta, Inspector Nanda

Lal Banerji was murdered. I suspect one Rukhini of East Bengal, who got very high fever just after the occurrence. He used to stay at No. 144, Cornwallis Street. He was a friend of Gonesh and one day I went with Gonesh to see him. While we were there Haren asked Rukhini to be very careful, as he might disclose everything in his delirium, and asked him not to go out of his mess. He was sent home after a few days. I can identify him, though I do not know his full name.

Haran asked me to go in a party for committing a dacoity somewhere on the Howrah-Amta Light Railway. He asked me to go to Telkal Ghat station, where Jogesh Chandra Mitter *alias* Madaru of Sibpur would be waiting for me. The party was divided into two batches. As I was a few minutes late I could not meet Jogesh who went with the first batch.

Among the members of the second batch I saw Lalit Mohan Chakravarti of Netra and Bhutan. They went by the 7-30 P. M. train. I could not go.

Haren left Calcutta and gave me a number 1A 251, and asked me to listen to any man who would show me that number. One afternoon Bishnu Pada Chatterji of Sibpur brought me a letter from Nani Babu asking me to go in a party for committing a dacoity next day. The next day about 4 P.M. Bishnu-pada came to me and I accompanied him. It was a Friday, At the crossing of Bow Bazar Street and Circular Road Narendra Nath Chatterji *alias* Bhola was standing. We went to Beliaghata station. Bishnu gave me a rupee and I purchased a ticket for Deulia. He, Bhutan, Suresh Mittar, Lalit Chakarvarti and myself purchased tickets for Deulia, and the others for Netra. At some station between Beliaghata and Deulia two other of our men got into our compartment. They had tickets for Netra. In the train I was given a poison pill by Suresh. We got down at Deulia about 9-30 or 10 P.M. We crossed a railway bridge and waited for the other men who had tickets for Netra. After they joined us, we proceeded and waited for others who were to come from Majilpur. We had with us luchis, potatoes, bread, sugar and oranges which we had brought from Calcutta. About four or five men came from Majilpur. Torches were prepared

at the place where we waited. We brought the oil from Calcutta. We were about 14 in all, and we had eight revolvers and two daggers. Narendra Chatterji took the lead. Poison pills were served out to each of us. Our watchword was "Kali." Numbers were given to all of us.

Naren instructed us to suck the poison pill when seriously wounded to avoid being arrested alive. We waited for the vegetable train to pass. We had no wigs or false whiskers on that occasion. At midnight the vegetable train left Netra station. We could see it from where we were waiting, Then we proceeded. Lalit, who is a local man, tied a *chadar* round his face. Naren asked Suresh and me to remain as guards on the back side of the house. Both of us were given revolvers. The house was surrounded by very high walls. It was a *pucca* building. Atul Chandra Mukerji and another scaled the wall and opened the gate. The owner of the house got up and caught hold of Bhutan, but Noren Chatterji went up and gave him a severe blow, which made him let go of Bhutan. Bhutan had a dagger with him which cut his arm very badly. None of the villagers came to the help of the householder. The work was done quietly. I heard the screams of the females, and I saw our men moving about inside the *bari*. I could see through a hole in the back door. The work was done in half an hour, Lalit's father had got a good gun. In order to prevent it being used on this occasion against us, Lalit had taken the precaution of putting it out of order. After completing the dacoity, we proceeded to the railway bridge but we crossed the line not by the bridge, and we went along the side of a canal. After going some distance we stopped at a place where we prepared a list of the property. I saw one of our men tearing up a paper which looked like a postcard. We had with us a bull's-eye lantern. Naren Chatterjia and Bhutan had drunk some liquor at the place where we waited before we went to the dacoity. The party was then divided into two batches, one consisting of Noren Chatterji, Bhutan, Suresh Mitter, Bishtupada, Upendra Krishna Deb, Atul Chandra Mukerji, Lalit and myself. I don't know the names of the other batch which carried the property and the six revolvers and were

going to Majilpur. Our party went towards Mogra Hat station, and we lost our way in the dark, and met the other party again after two or three hours. We eventually got on the high road, and reached a village where Suresh and Bhutan made enquiries. The village was Harirampur. A man had died in the village that night, and while his corpse was being carried to the burning ghat, we concealed ourselves by the side of a tank. Here Lalit left us saying that he would go to his maternal aunt's house. It was then dawn, and we walked fast. A little way further on, we stopped a few minutes. Bhutan gave us each ten rupees, We then split up into two parties, one consisting of Noren Chatterji, Bhutan, Suresh and myself, the other of Atul, Upen, and Bishtu. The second party was told to go to Mogra Hat station. We four waited about 20 minutes, and went across the fields to Sangrampur station. Half-way to the station we passed a tank, where we washed our face and hands. Naren Chatterji proposed that we should also take the train at Mogra Hat station, but I said I could not go any further. So Suresh and myself went to Sangrampur station, and the other two went towards Mogra Hat station. Suresh and I crossed a bazar. As we crossed a wooden bridge near the station, two constables passed by us. Suresh had a revolver with him. At the Sangrampur station we saw Bhusan Das who has a *jatra* party. We took the 8 P.M. train and I took a ticket for Beliaghata, and Suresh for Dhakuria. At Mogra Hat station we met the men of the first batch. We reached Calcutta at 10 A.M. I returned the balance of the ten rupees to Bishtu. In reply to me next day Bishtu told me that the ornaments had been melted down, and that a watch and a purse had been thrown into the water. The Netra dacoity was committed in *Baisakh* 1916. Lalit instructed us to say that we had been to Mitter's place in Kulgachia, if anyone met us and questioned us. At the place where we waited we left two or three bottles, and a newspaper, *Nayak*. Dacoities are planned by Noni Gopal, to whom information is sent by the members from the different towns and villages, as to the people and houses, etc. People are then sent from Calcutta to commit the dacoities. I have heard that the dacoities

in Howrah and Sibpur were the work of Noni Gopal's men.

The Morehal dacoity was committed by our members. Two of them—Sibu Hazra and Jotin Hazra—made a confession before the police. Noni Babu heard of this, and fearing arrest, he summoned his lieutenants (i.e. the connecting links with each district) including myself for Bankura district. He gave us various instructions,—how to procure arms, how to keep the names and accounts of the society, and how to manage the work of organisation. He said that they purchased firearms from the different shops in Calcutta through the repairers, and that they got firearms from foreign countries through the native sailors and lascars of the ships. Money is advanced to them, and they get a reward when they bring the firearms. He said that a large number of firearms can be smuggled from Burma where we have got a branch. He told us to go to our districts and to recruit new members. He introduced me to Gyanaranjan Bannerji of Sibpur, saying that he would supply me with firearms when required. He also gave me the name and address of Jotin Biswas (?), a second year student of the Krishnagar College, whom I could consult in difficulties. He said that my name and address had also been sent to him. Noni Gopal said that he would bring some one from Madras and introduce him to us, so that we might co-operate with the people of Madras. Sibu Hazra and Jotin Hazra were called and asked to retract their confession, but as they declined to do it, it was decided to kill them. Manmatha, one of the accused in the Morehal dacoity case, was summoned to give us the names and addresses of the relatives of Sibu and Jotin, so that we might easily find them. I took down the addresses of Sibu Hazra's relations. Manmatha was paid Rs. 30 and Rs. 30 were offered to Jotin Hazra as an inducement to make him retract. Upen and myself were selected to murder the two men. Sibu and Jotin Hazra were again summoned by Noni Gopal, and it was arranged we should murder them on that day. They did not turn up on that day, but they came unexpectedly on the previous day, so nothing could be done.

There were about 200 code words for keeping the names and addresses of the members. I was given five code words, which I don't remember now. I give an example with the work "Magistrate." A table is formed as shown, and each letter of the alphabet is represented by a fraction, the numerator being the number of the vertical column and the denominator the number of the horizontal line—

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	M	A	G	I	S	T	R	A	T	E
2	N	B	H	J	T	U	S	B	U	F
3	O	C	I	K	U	V	T	C	V	G
4	P	D	J	L	V	W	U	D	W	H
5	Q	E	K	M	W	X	V	E	X	I
6	R	F	L	N	X	Y	W	F	Y	J
7	S	G	M	O	Y	Z	X	G	Z	K
8	T	H	N	P	Z	A	Y	H	A	L
9	U	I	O	Q	A	B	Z	I	B	M
10	V	J	P	R	B	C	A	J	C	N

$$A = \frac{2}{1}, \frac{8}{9}, \frac{6}{8}, \frac{7}{10}, \frac{8}{1}, \frac{9}{8}$$

$$D = \frac{2}{4}, \frac{8}{4}$$

$$B = \frac{2}{2}, \frac{5}{10}, \frac{6}{9}, \frac{8}{2}, \frac{9}{9}$$

$$E = \frac{2}{5}, \frac{8}{5}, \frac{10}{1}$$

$$C = \frac{2}{8}, \frac{6}{10}, \frac{8}{8}, \frac{9}{10}$$

$$F = \frac{2}{8}, \frac{8}{8}, \frac{10}{2}$$

Thus C A B would be represented by $\frac{2}{8}, \frac{8}{1}, \frac{5}{10}$, any of the values of A, B, C, being taken.

The code words were to consist of an even number of letters—not less than 8, nor more than 12.

This code was found difficult and tedious. So Gyanaranjan and I devised an easier method, which is shown below. The

consonants are divided into three groups, and the vowels into one group :

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	b	c	d	f	g	h	j	$a=4^1$
2	k	l	m	n	p	q	r	$b=1^1$
3	s	t	v	w	x	y	z	$c=1^2$
4	a	e	i	o	u			$d=1^2$

Thus c, a, b would be shown 1^2 4^1 1^1

I asked Noni Babu how I could live in Bankura without some work or pretence of work to avoid suspicion of the police. He told me that Brojendra Kishore Rai Chaudhuri, zamindar of Mymensingh, and Chief Agent of the Hindustan Life Insurance Company, is a member of our society. He said that he would write to Brojendra Babu and ask him to appoint us as agents of the Insurance Company. I know that Sachindra Nath Ghose of Dacca and Hari Das Chakravarti of 31, Sita Ram Ghose's Street, Calcutta, were thus made sub-agents of the Insurance Company at Nani Gopal's request.

Noni Babu wanted to start a gunpowder factory at the house of Khirod Chandra Bhuiya, Vakil of the High Court, in 78, Russa Road North, Bhowanipore. But the plan fell through, as Khirod Babu, who is a member of our society, thought it unsafe to do this in the very heart of the town. Khirod Babu's house is the property of Digambar Nanda, zamindar of Contai, who, though not an active member, helps us with money. His nephew, Sailendra Nanda, is a member of our society.

A few days before I committed the Haludbari dacoity, Noni Babu said that he had secured a garden house somewhere on the Bantra side where he wanted to start a gunpowder factory. He also told me that he had a complete set of machinery for turning out cartridges, and he suggested that I should learn the art of making cartridges after I had committed the dacoity at Haludbari.

It was once proposed by Ganesh that I should go to America to learn explosives, and that he would manage my expenses from Digambar Nanda through Khirod Bhuiya. So I applied for a passage to the Scientific and Industrial Association of Calcutta, No. 6, Old Post Office Street. Noni Babu heard of the proposal, and he asked me to meet him one day at the burning ghat at Sibpur. Haren and I went to see him at the appointed place. He said that there were members in America to whom he would give me letters of introduction, and this would enable me to get into some explosive department. He said I would have to learn the art of writing letters in the way adopted for communicating with members in foreign countries. I was only given a hint, though I did not learn the art. Ganesh said that Digambar Nanda had spent lots of money this year in purchasing houses in Calcutta and Benares, and he could not therefore bear my expenses this year. Noni Babu suggested the murder of some police officers, but there was a diversity of opinion. Some were of opinion that only the police officer himself should be killed, but others thought that he and his whole family should be destroyed. It was afterwards decided that the whole family should be destroyed, because if only the officer is killed, Government grants lands and money to the members of his family. I now remember the names of three or four police officers who were doomed. I heard the names from Noni Babu. There were Lal Mohan of Midnapore, Maulvi Shamsul Alam, Kumud Das Gupta, and probably Sashi who lives in the northern section of the town.

In August 1909 Jogendra Nath Chakravarti, Pundit of Kuchiakol, came to Calcutta, and he was a member of another society in Calcutta. He had an idea that Arabinda Babu was the leader of all these societies, so he asked the leader of his own society to arrange for an interview with Arabinda Babu ; but as he could do so, Jogendra saw me. I know him from before. I said I would try to arrange an interview. He, however went to the Raja of Narajole and got an introductory letter. But he could not see Arabinda Babu ; so he again came to me and showed me the letter. The contents were, so far as

I remember, that he is a reliable man in whom we could confide our secrets. I took the letter to Noni Babu who said that he would send it through member Amaresh Kanjilal of Jessore, who used to carry messages from Noni Babu to Arabinda Babu. But as Amaresh was away, I was deputed to go to Arabinda Babu, and to say I was Noni Babu's man from Sibpur. I went twice to his house in College Square, but I could not see him. After two or three days Amaresh returned and took the Pundit with him to see Arabinda Ghose. I do not know what conversation they had.

Jogendra Chakravarti used to visit the Raja of Narajole very often, and he stayed in Calcutta with Khitish Chandra Chakravarti in 14, Ram Tanu Bose's Lane.

This year I went to the Hooghly Conference, where I met Jogendra Chakravarti, who said that he had been appointed a delegate from Midnapore and that his expenses were being borne by the Raja of Narajole.

(Sd.) J. A. EZECHIEL

The 9th March 1910

(Sd.) SAILENDRA KUMAR DAS

(To be continued to-morrow.)

The members of our society used to go to practise target in batches of 7 or 8 by the side of the Salt Lakes to the east of Calcutta. The lake is about 2 or 3 miles from the Jadabpur railway station. I had been to that place only once. A man named Charu Chandra Ghose of Chetla used to teach the boys the art of shooting. He holds a license for a D. B. M. L. gun, which he used to take with him. I went to practise target with Suresh Mitter of Kidderpore. We purchased two tickets for Kalighat tram depot, and from there we walked to Jadabpur railway station. We reached there about 12-30 P.M. and met Charu Chandra Ghose. Kiran Chandra Rai, Monoranjan Das, Behari and Anil. They are all Chetla people. They were waiting for us, having arrived by train. We then went to the place for target practice. On the way there is a big tank, where we got good drinking water. There are about 10 or 12

hamlets at the spot where we used to sit down for target practice. There are also two dead palm trees in which marks of bullets can still be found. We used to sit at the back of one of the hamlets. The day I went the owner of the house asked us to move away, as the females of the house were unable to use the pond at the back of the house. This man can identify all of us. Our men used to go to target practice every Sunday and on the days when Charu Babu's office was closed. There are many cocoanut trees round the tank, and the gardener who looks after them can also identify many of us. It came on to rain about 5 P.M., and we returned home. At Jadabpur station I saw two of the station staff playing with *lathis*. Suresh and I joined them. That day we used Charu Babu's M. L. gun. The bullets had been prepared by Kiran and Manoranjan. We used to practise also with revolvers. Noni Babu told us that next time he would give us a Martini-Henry rifle to practise with.

Towards the end of September 1909 Gonesh, Bhuban Mukerji, Upendra Krishna and a few others came to commit a highway robbery on the Sara Ghat side, but they could not succeed, as the money had been taken away the previous day and the informer had not given them proper information. I heard this from Gonesh.

Gonesh prepared a list of members in Midnapore district at my place. On the same day I prepared at his request a list of members in Bankura district. I was then staying at 4, Huzuri Mull's Lane.

I know by sight and name some of the members of the Midnapore party. They are—

Phanindra Nath Das, a pleadership student. Tarak Chandra Das. Dwijendra Nath Das. Kherod Chandra Bhuiya, Profulla Chandra Bhattacharjya. Pramatha Nath Banerji, 4th year student of the Ripon College. His left hand was amputated. Sarat Chandra Jana, M. sc., student of the Presidency College. Nibaran Chandra Das, Sub-Inspector of Schools. Sachindra Nath Ghose. The elder brother of Satyendra Nath Bose. I know others sight but not by name.

Nanigopal is our immediate head, but I have heard that there are also men above him. I think Arabinda Ghose is the adviser. Noni Babu used to see him often. One day I saw Noni Babu coming out of Arabinda Babu's house as I was returning from the City College. It was the birthday celebration of Raja Ram Mohan Rai. I was introduced to one Lakhi Kanta Chakravarti, of Commilla, by Gonesh and was asked to see whether Lakhi Kanta's society would co-operate with our society. Lakhi Kanta stayed at 6, Nur Muhammad Sarkar's Lane. He said that his society had two leaders—Basanta Sarkar and Bijoy Sarkar—that they had taken some land for acclimation in Agartola, and there they used to train their boys. I could not settle anything with him, so I sent Gonesh to do the work.

A Japanese, whose name I forget, once came to Calcutta and stayed in No. 1, Madge's Lane. He advertised that he could teach Jujitsu and other tricks by which a weak man could overcome a strong man even if he was armed. Nonigopal went to him and settled with him how much he would take per month for each man whom he taught. He wanted Rs. 30 per head, and Jogesh Mitter and I were selected to learn the art, I got fever and so we could not go then. After about a fortnight I went to find the Japanese, but I learned that he had left Calcutta for Bombay two or three days before. He lived in the third story.

Noni Babu said that he was now getting men from the native army. About three or four months before my arrest, Noni Babu said that he had got a havildar or subadar and asked me if I could keep him in Bankura. This man would teach us military tactics and military drill, and he would get Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 as remuneration. I could not manage to keep him in Bankura.

Suresh Chandra Chakravarti of Barisal saw that they had a secret society, and their chief work now was to collect money. He said that Annada Babu, a teacher of Barisal, and Lalit Mohan Das ; Professor of the City College, were among their leaders. On one occasion the brother of Ahindra Nath Ghosh left home secretly and went to Benares. As Ahindra had no friends there he asked me for introductory letters to persons in

Benares and Allahabad. Suresh Chakravarti said they had many members in the United Provinces. I had no friends in Benares, so I applied to Suresh for the introductory letters. Suresh was living in a mess in Sambhu Charan Chatterji's Street. He gave me three letters—one to Charu Babu, Secretary of the Ram Krishna Mission, Benares, one to Mahendra Nath Ghosh, one to the nephew of Doctor Major Bose of Allahabad, who is a member of the society. He said that Mahendra Nath Ghosh was a very important member of the society. He also mentioned Monindro Chandra Sen, a student of the City College, whom I know. While staying in Calcutta, Suresh used to see Lalit Mohon Das and J. Choudhri, Barrister-at-law, every day and get money from them for his expenses.

I have heard of another society. Pramodindu of Midnapore asked Sachindra Nath Ghosh of our society to leave our society and join his. As the rule of our society is that one member should not know the name of another member, I thought that Pramodindu was a member of our society. I spoke to Noni Babu and came to know that there is no one of the name of Pramodindu in our society. I know Pramodindu by name and by sight.

I have heard of another society from Jogendra Chandra Chakravarti, late Pundit of Kuchiakol, Satish Chandra Gossain, a 1st-year student of the Metropolitan College, is a member of this society.

We used to see Noni Babu in three places : (1) In the Botanical Gardens, or (2) in a broken house beside the house of Bishnupada Chatterji in Sibpur, or (3) in the timber yard of Noni Babu.

The following members of our society are known to me by name and sight :

- (1) Bhuban Chandra Mukherji of Sibpur.
- (2) Bhutan, younger brother of (1).
- (3) Narendra Nath Chatterji *alias* Bhola.
- (4) Doctor Sarat Chandra Mitter of Kidderpore who has a dispensary, where poison pills are prepared.
- (5) Suresh Chandra Mitter, brother of (4)

- (6) Jogesh Chandra Mitter *alias* Madaru of Sibpur.
- (7) Bishnupada Chatterji of Sibpur.
- (8) Gyanaranjan Banerji of Sibpur.
- (9) Amaresh Kanjilal of Jessore.
- (10) Pabitra Charan (?) Dutta of *Chattra Bhandar*.
- (11) Hari Das Chakarvarti of 31, Sitaram Ghose's Street.
- (12) Purna Chandra Chakarvarti of Brajanath Mitter's Lane.
- (13) Jyotish Chandra Mukherji.
- (14) Labanga Chandra Sarkar.
- (15) Durga Das Chakarvarti of Cossipore.
- (16) Chandi Das Chakavarti, recruited by 12, and initiated by me in the house of a relation of Purna in Fordyce Lane. He was initiated a second time by Gyanranjan Bannerji in the Botanical Gardens. He was the Head Master of a minor school in the Jalpaiguri district. He was sent to Jalpaiguri by Noni Babu to see if the Jalpaiguri society was ready to work with us. Chandi Das wrote to Noni Babu in a cover addressed to Purna. I took that letter to Noni Babu and I saw its contents. It stated that they could only work with us if Nikhileswar Rai or Provash Chandra De would say that our society was reliable.
- (17) Satyen 'ra Nath Bannerji, 2nd year student of the City College.
- (18) Sachindra Lal Bose (?), 1st-year student of the Bangabasi College.
- (19) Jimut Bahan Sen of Purulia. He was initiated by me a few days before the last Puja vacation.

I have already mentioned the names of others. Of the names just mentioned the first ten are important members, dangerous members.

- (20) Another man who work in the *Chattra Bhandar* is known to me by sight, but not by name.
- (21)&(22) There are two important members living in Masjid-bari Street, one of whom is very strong and works in the Bengal Secretariat.

(23) Nonigopal Ganguli (?), a partner in Noni Babu's timber business.

(24) Abinash Chandra Chakarvarti, the dismissed Munsif, of Bharenga.

Noni Babu asked me to obtain explanation from Purna Chandra Chakarvarti and Hari Das Chakavarti, relations of Abinash Pabu, because Abinash Babu had written several letters saying that Purna and Hari Das were not reliable men, Purna and Hari Das said that they did not know why Abinash had complained against them.

(25) Kamalesh, a friend of Amaresh Kanjilal. He stays in a mess in the Harrison Road.

(26) Kishori of Sibpur.

(27) A man living in the house opposite Noni Gopal's house.

(28) Gyan Mitter of Beadon Street.

(29) Hari Sadhan of Sibpur.

(30) Rajani Kanta Chakravarti, 1st-year student, Ripon College.

(31) Asok Chandra Neogi of Hartaki Bagan Lane.

(32) Sachindra Nath Rai or Chaudhuri, 1st-year student of the Veterinary College.

I know others by sight.

Noni Babu never keeps any incriminating thing in his house. He always remains in the background. Documents and letters are kept by Bishtupada Chatterji. Bhuban, Jogesh and Gyana-ranjan keep the accounts and the register. I have heard that they have collected a large number of firearms, but I don't know where they are stored. Noni Babu keeps five or six arms with some selected members.

Once there was a quarrel between a goldsmith and Bhuban Mukerji, Nanigopal and others. The goldsmith was mercilessly beaten and had to be sent to the hospital. He lodged a complaint at the thana Sibpur against these men. One of our members, Kisor, lives in the room next to the goldsmith's. That day Kishori had five revolvers and about 200 cartridges kept with him by Noni Babu. Kishori was afraid his room

would be searched in connection with this assault case. So he threw the revolvers and cartridges into a tank at the back of his house. I went to Noni Babu next morning to get a revolver for Gonesh. Kishori was sent for, and when asked for the revolvers he said he had thrown them into the tank.

The revolvers and cartridges were taken out, but five or six cartridges remained in the tank. Some fisherwomen while fishing got those cartridges and took them to goldsmith's shop. The goldsmith tested them and said they were not gold. He did not know they were revolver cartridges. So he returned them to the fisherwomen. Noni Babu heard of this, and cleverly managed to get the cartridges back from the fisherwomen.

I was once introduced to Kiron Chandra Mukerji, the editor of *Pantha*, by Ganesh. The books were given to a bookbinder in Cornwallis Street, and as Kiron had no money I paid the binding charges, and took the books from the bookbinder. There were 1,500 copies, out of which 1,000 copies were made over to Lolit Mohan Chakravarti of Netra for being sold. Two hundred copies were sent to Bankura through Nalini. The rest were sold in Calcutta. The *Pantha* was a seditious pamphlet for which Kiron has been convicted and imprisoned. Ganesh kept the books at 17, Jhama Pukur's Lane.

I went on a visit to Tamluk with Ganesh in the beginning of 1909. There I found a secret society, the leader being Surendra Nath Rakshit *alias* Bhim Rakshit. I don't know if it has any connection with ours. The members of the Tamluk society are :

Sarat Chandra Das

Manmatha Nath Bose

Pramod Ranjan (?)

I know Bhim Rakshit from before. I had met him in Calcutta at his uncle's house in Baranasi Ghose's Street.

(Sd.) J. A. EZECHIEL,
District Magistrate, Nadia.

(Sd.) SAILENDRA KUMAR DASS

10-3-1910

I BELIEVE that this confession was voluntarily made. It was taken by me and was read over by the person making it, and

admitted by him to be correct, and it contains a full and true account of the statement made by him.

KRISHNAGAR JAIL
10th March 1910

(Sd.) J. A. EZECHIEL,
District Magistrate, Nadia,

The deposition of Jotindra Nath Hazra, Prosecution Witness No. 4, aged about 21 years, take on solemn affirmation under the provisions of the Indian Oaths Act, X of 1873 before me, H. P. Duval, Additional Magistrate of Howrah, this 12th day of April 1910.

My name is Jotindra Nath Hazra. My father's name is Adhar Chandra Hazra. I am by caste Sadgope. My home is at mauza Kurchi, police-station Singti, zilla Howrah, where I reside and where I am cultivator. I used to work before with my mother's brother in Calcutta in Jhamapukur, Mechua Bazar Street. This was 5 or so years ago. He had a tobacco and stationery and miscellaneous goods shop. My father's family was supported by my uncle, so I got no pay but only my food. My uncle could not look after his property, and so he gave up the shop. He was alone, so he could not see after his own lands. My father died about one and-a-half years ago. I was with my uncle two years, and then he gave up the shop. I looked about for other work in Calcutta. When he closed his shop, I stayed some time with him when he was settling up the accounts. Then I got a post in an excise shop for opium and *ganja*, belonging to Rakhal Hazra in Chitpur Road. I was with him for a year or a year and-a-half. My father's elder brother's wife died, and I went home. She had brought me up, and so I cried when I heard she was dead, and I came home with my father. After being here about one and-a-half months, my father said, "My circumstances are not good, you had better return to Calcutta and try to get work." I returned, but could find none. I came to Calcutta off and on to get work. A little after Shibu Hazra and Dasu Chatterji, my co-villagers, and I used to play cards and talk together, and I did no work. After another four months my father and other relatives began to get annoyed with me. My father got so annoyed that he

even grudged giving me my food. My mind got disturbed owing to this treatment. There is a *chogra*, Satya Banerji, of our village, who smokes *ganja*. He used to come and join us in our games and talks. I then used to sleep in Dasu's *boitakhana* and not even go and take my meals. Satya advised me to smoke *ganja*, saying my brain would be cleared. So I did so. Dasu is our priest, and the ladies of his house were kind to me from my childhood. They used to give me food there for, say, 15 days in a month. So things went on like this for five or seven months. One day I had my meal at home, and I was sitting at the *sadar* of Dasu's house under a *bel* tree. Shibu Hazra (he and I had read together) came to play with me. He asked where Dasu was. I went into Dasu's house and found him brushing his hair. I told him Shibu was here. Dasu said he was coming. I and Shibu sat and waited for him talking. Shibu said to me, "Your circumstances are bad, and you sit here doing nothing. Your family is in debt. How long will you go on like this? If you swear not to tell anyone, I will tell you something." I said, "What is it?" He said, "It will do you good, as you do nothing now and are useless. You will be able to earn something." I said, "Say what you have to say." I promised not to tell anyone. He said, "I will tell you, but first take an oath. I said, "What is it I must take an oath? You had better tell me." Shibu, after I said I could not take an oath, said, "You will have to do dacoity." I said, "How can I?" He said he could show me how, and warned me not to tell anyone. I said I did not believe him, and that he only told me this as being a *ganja*-smoker. He said, "No. It is not untrue. The *swadeshi* agitation is going on now, and the agitators are committing dacoities and dacoity is one of the principal limbs (*prodhan anga*) of the movement." I said I

Note—Recorded from 8 A. M. to 12 noon on 9th March 1910, and from 8 A. M. to 11 A. M. on 10th March 1910 at Krishnagar Jail.

Exh. 69.

H. P. D.

24-5-1910

(Sd.) J. A. EZECHIEL

could not believe that the *swadeshi* agitators, who were working for country's good, would commit dacoity. He said, "You need not do these things now, but when I convince you this is for the country's good, would you do it then?" I said, "At present I do not believe you, but afterwards, if you convince me, I will believe you." I asked him if he was alone in the matter, or if others were with him. He said, "There are many well-to-do and learned men of Calcutta, and sons of well-to-do men who are in this matter. Who are you? Only an ignorant villager." I said, "can you show me some of these people of Calcutta?" He said, "Yes, I can, certainly." He said, "Will you go to Calcutta?" I said, "Yes, but it is expensive." He offered to take me at his expense. I agreed to go. I then asked him how long he had been in this business. He said, "Eight months to a year." I asked why he had not told me before. He said, "You want a good deal of skill in this matter. You are too frivolous." He said he would take me to the house of a Babu in Calcutta. I said, "Is it these Babus' profession to commit dacoities?" He said, "Yes, at present their profession is dacoity, but there is a great deal of hidden meaning mixed in these dacoities which you will know of later."

There was no further conversation then.

Shibu said he would take me to Calcutta three or four days later. After three or four days, he said he was going to Calcutta, saying he would go himself first and ask the people whether he should take me there or come here. He said, "Such were the orders that none should be taken without orders." He went off that day to Calcutta. He returned the day after next, and I asked him, and he told me a man from Calcutta was coming, and he would find what I was like and then further details will be settled. During the next month Shibu went two or three times to Calcutta. I constantly asked when the man was coming.

My father sent a letter to my uncle, saying I was doing no work and my health was bad and, if I went on like this, I should die, and asking him to take me away. My uncle came on receipt of the letter to our house. I told Shibu of this, and that my uncle wanted to take me away. He said, "Wait three or four

days and I will go to Calcutta again and, on my return, I will tell you." I told my uncle I would come in three or four days. Shibu went to Calcutta. My uncle went home. Shibu said the man would come the next day. He did not come, so I went off to my uncle, Rakhal Ch. Ghose.

Satya Banerji and a Santal came there two days after my arrival. I was then sitting at the shop of Jotin *chogra*. My cousin told me that two people had come for me. I went and saw Satya and the Santal sitting in the *sadar*. Satya gave me a letter and also told me that Shibu said the Babu had come from Calcutta, and I was to go back with them to my village as the Babu was waiting. At that time my uncle came up, and he was angry, and he beat me and he threatened to hand Satya over to the police, saying he had already ruined me with his *ganja* smoking, and now he wanted to get back to him again. I took up the letter and my uncle went to bathe. Satya got angry as he was abused, and he went off. I did not go.

After 15 days Shibu sent me a post-card, asking me to come as quickly as possible and not to make public what he had told me.

In two or three months I got, besides the post card, two or three letters from him. I replied I could not come without my uncle's leave, but I would not disclose anything. He came to the house one day to take me back. He said, "Are you willing to come, if I get his leave by some artifice?" I agreed. My uncle came to the *sadar*. Shibu said that he had come to fetch me to attend his sister's marriage, and my uncle let me go. I came back to my village the next day. Three or four days after Shibu brought me back. One Kristo Babu came there from Calcutta. His full name is Kristadhan Mukherji. He came to Shibu's house. I knew him. I met him at Dasu's *sadar*. He asked me my name, etc. He told Shibu, "You may bring Jotin with you when you like to our place." The next day he returned to Calcutta. After that 15 or 17 days after, Shibu brought me to Calcutta to that Babu's house. It is in Chaudhuripara in Sibpur. We came by train from Krishnagar and got down at Telkal Ghat and then went to the right to the *mat* behind the Howrah

Court, and thence went on south to Sibpur till we reached a jute mill and then a *chaurasta*, whence we turned west and then I saw the name Dharamtola Lane ; we left it to the right and went on westwards and then turned to the north. In front of his house are five trees — *bel*, *asok*, *amlakhi*, *bhar* and *ashud* — dedicated (*panchabati*). They had a platform of cement round them in the form of a ring. The door of the house is to the west ; so, in coming out, one sees these trees to one's east. I have been to that house three or four times. This is the first occasion. I sat down in a room to the right on entering. Krista came, and then he went away after seeing us. After about 15 minutes he returned and began to talk to us. About three-quarters of an hour after Nani Babu came. I knew him to be Nani Babu. I did not know his name then. He asked me my name, etc. He asked me if I was prepared to do any good, as we are doing for the good of the country. I said I was poor ; what good can I do ? He said I would have to be taught, but I must not reveal anything. I told him I could do as I was told, but my circumstances were very bad. He said that they would improve. He then said that for the good of your country you need self-reliance and strength of mind. I asked what he meant. He explained that *monertej* (strength of mind) meant not disclosing anything if one is tortured or has to suffer in doing anything, and that *attya biswas* (self-reliance) meant obedience to all orders to him without inquiring its object. There was no more conversation then.

The next day I came back home.

I went to Krista's house again with Shibu. There Nani Babu gave me advice in the same way as before. I said I did not understand the meaning of *attya biswas*, and asked him to explain it again. He said, "If you believe in your soul within you, you will be able to believe anything."

I went a third time there with him. Bhuban, Krista and Nani were there. I came to know their names then, I knew Krista from before. I came to know Bhuban was second brother of Krista. I had been told by Shibu on the first occasion Nani's name. Nani Babu then told me if I wished to do good to the country, the first necessity is money. Much money was necessary. He

said, "How can we get it? Government has a mint, but we have not." I said, "How, then, will we get money?" He replied, "Dacoity will have to be committed." I said, "Only low people's trade is dacoity, and if you commit it, it will be in the house of respectable people. How will you so benefit your country?" He said I must learn how to do dacoities. After that Krista Babu came to me, to our village. He asked me if we had courage enough to commit dacoity. We said we could, but must be shown how it is to be done.

Shibu after that came again to Calcutta, and on his return home I asked him what had occurred, and he said that Nani Babu had asked him to arrange for dacoity in our part of the country. This was in the beginning of *Aswin* 1315 or the end of *Bhadra*. There is one Rajani Rakhit in our neighbourhood. I forgot to mention before this that Nirode Mohanta came to the house of Shibu's father-in-law. To him Shibu told all about these dacoities, and about *swadeshi*, etc. Nirode Mohanta told him there was a very well-to-do man in his quarter at Diboira. This was in *Asar* or *Sravan* 1315. Shibu said he would go to Calcutta and fetch men and will return by the 9 p. m. train, and I was to wait at the *sadar* of Dasu's house. I was lying down there alone. Shibu came with one man about 11 or 11-30 p. m. with a big knife so long (shows over a foot) and three fingers broad. The man is Naren, a Brahmin. I could identify him if I saw him. Shibu told me at that time he was Naren Babu. At that time Nirode Mohanta was not present. They asked where was Nirode. I said he had fever and was staying at the house of a *baistab* in our village at Sitapore. He had told me before that when the people came from Calcutta, I was to go and call him. I was sent to fetch him quickly. I and Dasu went to fetch him, and Shibu and Naren stayed there. Nirode was asleep in the *baistab's* shop. I called him, and he got up. He said he was in high fever and could not go with them. We returned to Dasu's *sadar*. Shibu asked me and I told him. He said, "What is to happen? The man are collected at Tarakeswar. Go with Naren and tell them to go away." I said I could not go. Diboira is 7 or $7\frac{1}{2}$ *crosh* from my home, and 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$ *crosh* from Tarakeswar,

so the main body was sent to Tarakeswar. Dasu, Shibu and Naren then went off to Tarkeswar during the night, leaving about 1½ hours after their arrival. Shibu and Dasu returned two days after. Shibu said that Nani Babu had said that it was as well the dacoity had not taken place, and that he could send two men from his place to be shown the house mentioned by Nirode and the way to it. Ten or 12 days after two men came by the 9 P. M. train. Shibu met them at Krishnagar station and brought them and said to me, "You know the way better, as it is near your uncle's house. Let us first go together." I agreed. We left about 4-30 A. M. before people were up and went towards Diboira. The two men who came from Calcutta were Babus well-dressed with socks and shoes, and *pagri* tied round their faces and wore spectacles. I asked Shibu in the *mat* their names. He said, why I asked ? and he said, I should not ask. At the village of Bhujera there is one Rakhal Mandal, well known to my family. This was in *Jaista*. It was the time when the melons were growing in the villages, and we picked dates from the trees and ate them, also some melons. We turned aside to Rakhal's as we were thirsty, and sat in the *patsala* in his *sadar* and drank water. Rakhal came and gave us sweets (*sandesh*) and water. Rakhal asked where the Babus and Shibu lived, and I said Calcutta, and they said so too. We said we are going to Jehanabad on business. We refused to stay to a meal, and went on. We sat down at the Mayerpore *serai* on the Ahallya Bhai Road which goes to Rani-ganj side. There we sat down, and the shop-keepers were there ; we had some water. Nirode had told us to ask for his home from the shop-keepers. A shop-keeper showed it us. Shibu and I went to his house. He was not there. His brother had a small shop. We found him. He asked us what we wanted. We said we knew him, and we were passing on our way back from Jehanabad. He told us Nirode had not been home for one and-a-half months. We bought some *sandesh* from him and ate it and drank some water and returned to the *chuti*. Shibu said, "What can we do ?" We had something to eat, and about 4 P. M. we started back home. At that *chuti* I met Romesh Bagdi...a man of my *mama's* village. We returned back and

about 9 or 9-30 reached Shampur. A storm came on and we sat in a *Sonar Baniya's* shop. It was a goldsmith's shop. It rained hard for half-an-hour or three quarters. It was very dark. We had three revolvers with us and two daggers. The Babus agreed we must go on. Our houses were 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles off from Shampur. We went on and came to the Asauda *mat* where there were melons, and the people who owned them had huts to watch them. Shibu said, "There may be people in the huts we know. We will ask them for a light." There were four or five such huts. I went up to one of them. We had to pass under an *Asatya* tree, and Shibu tumbled over and the revolver he had with him fell out. In the dark we began to search for it. Shibu found it. We got up to the hut and a man came out with a light. Shibu said he was the son of Kedar of Kurchi, and asked for a smoke. He put his revolver in front of the lamp. The man—I think his name was Nitai—asked what it was. He said, "Only a weapon," and began to talk of other things. Shibu asked for a lamp, but there was none to spare, and so we got up and returned to the village. I went home, and the *bhadraloks* stayed in Shibu's *sadar*. Next day very early Shibu woke me up and told me to take the two men across the river up to the *bandh* which runs direct to Krishnagar. I did so and went home.

Shibu, about eight or ten days after, went to Calcutta again to Nani's. On his return I asked him, and he told me that Nani told us to look about for a dacoity and men could be sent from Calcutta. I said I could not go on like this without work. I was willing even to prepare *chillams* and do *Khansama's* work if I could earn something. If you can get Noni to give me something to do, well and good. Shibu said he would tell Nani Babu. He returned to Calcutta, and came back and said to me I was to go to Nani Babu. Four or five days after I got up at 4-30 A. M., and walked the whole way to Sibpur to Nani, as I could not afford to pay for the train. I went to Bhuban's house, and told him and Krista about my wants. Nani came in the evening and I told him and he said, "All right we will see." Next morning I told Bhuban Babu again saying I had no

money. He said, "All right, wait." and he went to Nani and came back and gave me a rupee. He told me to return in five or seven days, as there was not much money in hand then. I walked back home. Shibu asked me, and I told him I only got a rupee and am to return after five or seven days. He told me not to be impatient, as he was going to arrange a dacoity in the house of Rajaram Rakhit, of Protapchuck, Binodebati. Five or seven days after Shibu came to Calcutta and came back with Kristo Babu. He took Kristo and showed him the house. In the evening he told me to conduct Kristo up to the *bandh* on the way to Krishnagar. After that, at the middle or end of *Asur* there was a flood in the Damodar, and so it was not suitable for a dacoity. After many delays, Shibu came to Calcutta and brought back another Babu, whose name was Keshab De. Shibu said without doubt the dacoity will be committed 10 or 12 days. Shibu at that time told me the Babu's name was Rajani Babu. He showed him in the afternoon Rajaram's house and shop, and the next day I took him to the river. At the ghat, when I was going to see him across there was a Musalman youth, and we asked him to take him across, and he said wait, let me get one or two others. We were kept about 10 minutes Keshab told me to tell him to cross him over and he would pay what he wanted. Then Keshab went across.

On the 23rd or 24th *Aswin* the dacoity was fixed. Shibu went to Calcutta to arrange about it. I was told to be at Krishnagar station the night before, where I would meet the Babu whom I had met under the name of Rajani. When I saw them I was to keep 30 or 40 cubits from them, and they were to follow me. I went, but the train reached the station before me, and I met them about half-a-mile from the station with Rajani Babu. When he came to about 2 miles from the station to Arkati, I met Nibaran Nandi, who was then going to Calcutta. There are two tanks on either side of the road. The one on the north of the road is not used and had heavy jungle all round it. The men—there were seven—went and hid in this jungle. I stood there, and Rajani beckoned to me, and I went there. They were all sitting on the east side, and had spread

papers and towels on the top, and there were some four canvas bags. In a *hari* there were some sweets, and in a towel were fruits they brought from Calcutta. There were five revolvers with them. I know their names. I then only knew Noren *alias* Bholanath by name. The others were Keshab Babu, Badul Dey, Pulin Mitra, Satu Babu, brother of a doctor of Kidderpore, and there were three others, one of whom, I think, is named Monmotha. I ate with them and then they began to dry their cartridges. I remember another man was Kalipada Bhattacharji. The revolvers were rusting in the barrels, and Bhola began to clean them. About 4 or 4-30 Rajani told me to see if any one else was about on the road. If no one was there I was to whistle and they would come out. No one was there. I whistled and they came out. I was told to go on 20 or 50 cubits ahead, and they followed. We went on the road by the Damodar. My home is half-a-mile from there. I was told to go home and tell Shibu to come to me. He was, when we came near a date tree, near where they were sitting, to call out "Kali Babu." That was the watch-word. Shibu went and took them to a sugarcane-field belonging to Behari Lal. He returned to me. I was by the bank of my tank. Shibu fetched Dasu and took him to the Calcutta people. They first sent away Dasu and then me, then Shibu gave him Hari Adhikari of our village, and he went with them. Shibu saw to the preparation of the torches, etc., for them. I and Dasu went home. We were told when the villagers came out, we were to come out just as they did. We went and sat down in Dasu's house for music. As we reached his *sadar* we heard the noise of revolver shots. All the people ran out, including ourselves. All collected by the *pathsala*. People said there has been a dacoity at Rakhal's house. We all went up to Rakhal Samanta's shop. All of us then returned. Shibu came to the *sadar* of Dasu in about 15 minutes. He had had two revolvers with him which he had given the dacoits. Shibu came with Dasu and woke me up at 1 or 1-30 A. M. and took me to the sugarcane field where the dacoits had been sitting. There we met Haripada seated there. He told us three men had gone to Bagnan station and four to Tarkeswar. He had seven revolvers,

two swords, and two daggers lying in front of him. Shibu had a Huntley Palmer's biscuit tin, and he put about five revolvers in it. One was too long. It was a pin-fire one. He dug a hole in the ground by the tank and buried the revolvers. I and Dasu came home. Hari had gone before us. Hari told us that the pin-fire revolver none knew how to fire, and two other revolvers were bad in some way, and so many people collected that nothing was obtained.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

READ over to him in Bengali and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

AFTER reading over, he says :

Nani, before he spoke to me about self-reliance, on the occasion of my third visit, made me take certain oath. He and Bhuban Brahmin were seated together and said that seated as you are with a Brahmin, if you mention these matters to anyone else, you will be as one who lies with his own mother (*matri haran*), and you will be as guilty as if you killed cows and Brahmins ; and he made me take other vows, and he said I would be killed. He also said this is a "Secret Society." I said I did not understand Secret Society. So he told me it was a "*Gupta Samiti*" and that it was never to be mentioned ; and if I did speak of it, I and all my family will be killed.

(Sd.) JOTINDRA NATH HAJRA.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

12-4-1910.

RECALLED ON 13TH APRIL 1910

[*On solemn affirmation*] : After the dacoity, Shibu went to Nani's house about five or seven days after. He took with him the revolvers which he tied up in a *gamcha*, and then tied them round his waist, and over that he wore his shirt. He stayed there one or two days and then returned to our village. I asked what Nani said. He said nothing was taken, and that there was a *jhogra* among the people who came to commit the dacoity. At the time when these people came to commit dacoity, he said Nani Babu went to Birbhum and he had ordered Bhuban that, on his return from Birbhum, he would make proper

arrangements for this dacoity. But Rajani Babu *alias* Keshab Babu could not wait, and he got Bhuban to give the men, as he had already fixed the day of dacoity. Bhuban had objected to acting contrary to Nani Babu's orders ; and he said, "I cannot give many people, but you can take the few who are here and go, if you like." So, on their return after the dacoity, there was a quarrel between Keshab and Bhuban, as they had got nothing. They wanted to shoot one another. Shibu told me all this. After the return of Nani, Shibu told me that Nani gave orders to kill Keshab De. I asked if he said anything about my circumstances. Shibu told me I had better go to Nani Babu once. Five or seven days after I went to Nani Babu to his own house, which is on the west side of a tank which is next to the tank on the west side of Bhuban's house. When I arrived, Nani was not there. I sat there, and after a bit he arrived. He asked whether Keshab came to our place after the dacoity. I said, "Who ?" He said, "The Babu who came there after Kristo Babu had been there, and who wore spectacles." Then I came to know that Rajani's real name was Keshab. I said he had not come to us since the dacoity. I asked him to give me something. He told me to wait there or at Bhuban's as he had to go out. He then went away. I stayed an hour and, as no one came, I went to Bhuban's house. I ate there, and I saw no more of Nani that day. Next day I told Kristo Babu to go to Nani Babu and see if he will give me anything, as it was late and I wanted to go home. Kristo Babu went and came back after half an hour, and said Nani was not there, and he gave me a rupee of his own. I returned home and saw Shibu. He asked me what had happened, and I told him this is all a fraud ; that in the name of *swadeshi* these people get hold of sons of *bhadralok* and commit dacoity for their own benefit, and only pay those who can give them goods taken in dacoity.

Eight or ten days after Shibu told me that there was an easy job on hand, and that he had some men and I might join if I liked and if I did so, he was ready for committing dacoity. Shibu said he had done dacoity before. He said he had been in a dacoity at Shibpur. He said he had been in two or three other places for dacoity, and added, "Say if you are willing to

come in this dacoity." He said that there were, besides him and me, Dasu, Hari Adhikari and Atul Pal. He said he would not have Satya, as he smoked *ganja*, and would probably let out the secret. He said that in South Singhti is the *Bhandhab Samiti*, and Manmatha Nath Chaudhuri is the head of that *samiti* and Krishto Ghose, Shibu's brother-in-law and Nrityananda Singha Rai and *chogra* Satis, son of a Brahmin. I would know him, if I saw him. When I was staying with my uncle, Satya told me that Shibu had taken him and Dasu to a place in Calcutta where he had met many people at a *bari*. There was a tank there with an iron fencing all round, and he had seen a fine-looking Babu, with gold spectacles on, who had spoken to him sitting on the grass. Many people were coming and going, and all were in good spirits. He said he could identify the place, if he went there again.

Shibu said he would get two or three revolvers for the dacoity and some daggers. I said I would consider, and Shibu went to see if he could get men from Calcutta. He told Monmatha the same as he told me. Shibu told me that Monmatha had told him of a rich Musalman's house near South Singhti. I could point out the house. Shibu said he would speak to Nani Babu about committing dacoity there. He went to Calcutta and returned the next day, and he told seven or eight days after in *Kartik*, about 27th or 28th, the dacoity would take place at the Musalman's house. On the fixed day I was sitting at Dasu's *sadar* with him, and about 3 or 3-30 P.M. a *chogra*, Jogesh *alias* Madaru, came quickly from the east. When he was 50 cubits off I could see from the *sadar* (I had known him from before, as he came twice with Shibu before).

I asked. "What news?" I had heard before that some of the men would be detained at Kristanagar and some at Amta, and Shibu had sent Hari Adhikari to Amta the night before. It was arranged that Monmatha would come and wait on the *bandh* of the big river by the Jaynagar Ghat. We five and the people who came *via* Kristanagar station were to go south to Jaynagar Ghat; and Hari came to bring the men who got down at Amta north to the Jaynagar Ghat.

Jogesh Madaru came and said that the dacoity was not to take place today, as there was a mess over the dacoity in this quarter which Bholanath was concerned in ; and so Nani Babu would send an "expert leader" (English), and he had written to him, but he had not arrived, and so he had been sent to put it off for two days. I left him to talk with Dasu and went to fetch Shibu. He heard it, and said, "Let us go, as Monmatha will be waiting for us, and we will tell them to go away and return." We all went, including Madaru. After going about two miles, we met Hari Adhikari coming back. He said he was returning, as he had found no one. He asked where we were going ; we said, "To Monmatha." I did not know Monmatha then. Shibu knew him. I only knew Kristo Ghose. We got to the ghat and saw Monmatha standing there with a red "wrapper" on his body. Monmatha led us in advance, about 50 cubits ahead, and we followed. It was then after dusk. Monmatha went down to the river bank and, after going some four or five bighas, got into a boat, and we all went into it and sat there. Shibu told him that the dacoity was to be delayed. He said that Satis had gone to the place and had torches, etc., ready in a *mat* near the house. We left the boat, and crossed the river where it was dry and walked to Monmatha's house. He told us to stand by a mango tree near a tank near his house while he went to change the clothes. Fifteen or 17 minutes after he returned and took us to a bamboo bench outside a shop in front of the Gar Bhowanipore School, and told the shopkeeper to fry some *luchis* for us. We told the shopkeeper we were coming from Amta and were going to Dibhurshad, where we lived. We sat there and ate, and after a bit Satis came. He said he had been waiting on the spot, and came as none came there. Then we all came home again. Jogesh went home next morning Shibu went to Calcutta and returned with Kristo Babu and showed him the house at Morehal, where lived Soshi Saha, and Kristo said he would bring four men next Tuesday. When they did not come on Tuesday, Shibu said he would certainly do the dacoity next day ; and he sent Dasu early on Wednesday morning—the 17th *Agrahan*—to fetch Monmatha, Nityanand, Satis and Kristo, brother-in-law

of Shibu. He brought them back about 5-30 P.M. Shibu told me to go with Monmatha, Satya, Kristo and Satis after sunset, to go *via* Munshipur Ghat, and to go and sit by the side of a *masjid* at Hariharpur ; and he would meet us there. When Dasu first brought Monmatha and the others they were kept in the broken *sadur* of Satya's house.

When we were at Hariharpur, Bepin Samanta came from Parhariharpur to Hariharpur. I knew him, and I told the men to say that they belonged to a *jatra* party on their way to Tarkeswar. Bepin passed on. Nitya began to cry, "Kali Babu, Kali Babu," as the others were late. After half an hour they all came. We all went on to Morehal. We met two people on the embankment on the way, and they asked where we were going, and we said to Tarkeswar. When about half a mile from Soshi's house, we went into a *mat* by the river, and there we arranged our clothes, and prepared our *pagris* and tied our cloths in *malkocha* style. Torches were prepared. We then went to the house. We stood under the *bandh* 30 *hats* off. Shibu told Hari to go up to the house and see whether the lights were still alight. It was then about 7-30 P.M. He came and said that the lights were alight and the door was half ajar. So Shibu told us all to enter the house. Monmatha and Shibu stayed outside. I and all the others went in and found a woman sleeping there. The house had two *ghars*—one facing south and the other facing east. The lamp was in the south-facing room. Nitai lit a torch from the lamp. Kristo and Satis went into the south-facing room. Dasu was doing duty inside the bari, carrying a sword. I stood below the east-facing room. Atul got inside the east-facing hut with the torch. Monmatha and Shibu at that time (they had two revolvers) fired off their revolvers. We had in all two revolvers and three swords and one or two daggers. At the noise many came out I heard them and I ran out over to the *bandh*. From there I saw people running from all sides. I ran down to the river, crossed it and went and hid in a wood. I heard a great noise of people and the noise of revolvers from there. I heard cries of "He is caught" about 15 minutes afterwards. I saw a man under arrest of the people coming within three or

three and-a-half bighas of me. They had caught him on the river bank on the west side of the river. They took him back to Soshi's house. When the noise stopped about 3 or 3-30 A.M. I went back home alone. On my return I saw Shibu, Nitai, and Kristo asleep on a taktaposh at Shibu's. I said one man was arrested. I think Monmatha. I then went home to bed. The next day I went to Shibu's house. Kristo only was there. Kristo told me he had a row with Shibu when he came back about a man being arrested. Kristo said he did not know what others got ; he got a gold *nat* and a chain. He gave them to me. He said he did not want to have conversation with Shibu. I went home with these things. I met Shibu in the morning and he told me either Monmatha or Satis had been arrested. Shibu went off. On Friday there was some paddy being cut, and I was there and the police brought Monmatha to our village. I was told that Monmatha had mentioned Satya's name and the police were looking for him. At that time Shibu came and said, "Don't run away ; let each be in his own house doing his own work." Satya I met and warned to run away. He said he was not guilty and went home, where the police caught him. They arrested Shibu, too, and our names were mentioned. I, Dasu, Hari and Atul Pal hid ourselves. Our houses were all searched. After the house search I came back to my house, and after my meal I again hid in the jungle, and about 3 or 3-30 A.M. I went off to Tarkeswar and came thence by train to Calcutta to Nani Babu. There I stayed one month and five to seven days either at Nani's house or Bhuban's house or at Santragachi with Badal De (he had gone with us to the dacoity at Binodebati), and I stayed one day with one Amrita Babu at Bara Bazar in a *gali*. I returned back home the day after I returned from his house to Nani's house. I had told Nani Babu about the *nat* and chain. He told me to go home and he would send Dasu to fetch them. While I was at Nani's I met other people—a Bistupada Mukerji, of Sibpur, Tinkori Ghose, Kali Babu, and others whom I could recognise, but whose names I do not know. One was Haren Babu. At Santragachi I met Badal De, Pulin Mitter, and Kalipada Bhattacharji. They came to Sibpur and took me to Badal.

Badal worked in an office in the north of Dalhousie Square. Ambika Babu, whom I met, worked in an office on south west of Dalhousie Square. Kali Babu works in an office in China Bazar. Bhuban works in a Life Insurance office in Bow Bazar.

I returned home, and Dasu gave me a small box* and some wax. I put the articles in the box and put a cloth over it, and sealed it up and gave it to Dasu, and I had been warned not to tell Dasu the contents of the box. Dasu went off to Calcutta. I stayed at home, and on 23rd *Magh* I, Hari, and Dasu were arrested by the police, but were acquitted on the 18th *Baisakh* 1316. This was in the Morehal case. I was let off in the Sessions. Monmatha was convicted. I was let off on a Saturday and came to Calcutta on Sunday and went to Nani's house alone. I saw Bhuban asleep in his house. I woke him up and told him all and asked for Nani. He went out and fetched Nani Babu. I told him of all my expenses and Nani told me to come the next Saturday. I went there the next Saturday, and told him I wanted work and I could not do this sort of work. Nani told me I was too timid and he would find some other work as I was unfit for his work, and he gave me a letter and sent Bistupada with me to Kali Babu in China Bazar on the following Wednesday. I gave him the letter, which was in English. He told me to come the following Wednesday, when I would get work. I came out. As I came out, I saw in China Bazar Ramnath Sahu and Upen Sahu. I told them I had come for work. I went back alone to Nani Babu, and he gave me three rupees and sent me home, saying I was to come on Wednesday. I returned home and I went to my uncle's home to fetch paddy, and so did not go next Wednesday. I then, while there, heard a case was instituted against me under section 110. I was arrested and punished. I was convicted on the 17th August.

There is one Harsan Charal of our country, who lived near Krishnagar station. He used to teach *lathi*-play at Nani's house to Nani, Madaru and others. This I knew from just before the Morehal dacoity. I saw him the third occasion I went to Nani's house ; also I saw Algu Khotta, who is a servant of Nani.

Bhutnath Sen Gupta, of Udainarainpur, I know. He is some-

relation of Nani Gupta. I have seen Nani Babu at his house once. Bhutnath was the man who brought Shibu first to Nani.

I saw Nani once since the section 110 case. It was on the 14th August—the first day of the section 110 case was the 4th, and the 14th was the second day. I saw him at Bhuban's house. He told me to come five or seven days afterwards. I don't remember if he fixed any day.

I know as members of the secret society : Shibu, Dasu, Hari, Atul Pal, Nityananda Singh Rai, Monmotha Nath Chaudhuri, Kristha Ghose, Satis of Singti, Nani Babu, Bhuban Babu, Kristo Babu, Jogesh Madaru, Bistu Mukherji (or Chatterji), Kali Babu, Tinkori Ghose, Keshab De, Bholanath *alias* Naren Babu, Brahmin, Satis Mitra (brother of Dr. Sarat, of Kidderpore), Pulin Mitra, Badal De, Kalipada Bhattacharji, Haran Babu, and a "master"—a Brahmin—whom I met at Nani Babu's house. Gyan Babu, and others whom I could identify. Shibu told me that Bholanath married a widow and lived at Kidderpore, where Sarat doctor and others lived.

All the dacoities, according to what Nani Babu told me, were for collection of money with which to purchase weapons and to maintain the people collected, and when the society became large, then there would be war with the English. He told me I had no right to ask, as I was only concerned with work, not the fruit of the work. He also quoted a *Sloka* from the *Gita* : "You have right only to the *Karma* and not to the fruit of it." He also said he would give me works : "*Ananda Mat*," "*Sitaram*," by Bankim Babu, and "*Matripuja*" or "*Svorboudhar*."

My father died on 17th *Sraban* 1315. After he died I came to Nani for help for the *sradh*. Then he gave me nothing, but Bhuban Babu gave me a rupee.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

READ over to witness in Bengali and admitted correct.

(Sd) H. P. DUVAL

HE then says : When Shibu spoke to me about the Morehal dacoity after we were released, he told that he had committed

a dacoity while I was still in jail at Hooghly (he had been acquitted from Serampore) near Haripal. He told me that he had, with what he got, redeemed two pairs of cloth which he had pledged with Abinash Chaudhuri, of Baira Kurchi. He also told me about Bholanath and the Sibpur dacoity, and said that Nani Babu had borne the expense of Bholanath in that case so as to get him released.

When I was arrested in the 110 case, I told all about what happened to Shams-ul-Alam, a Moulvi Sahib.

(Sd.) JOTINDRA NATH HAZRA

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
13-4-10

Jotindra Nath Hazra on solemn affirmation.

[Recalled at Howrah Sub-Jail on the 28th April 1910. In presence of Nani Gopal Gupta, Bhuban and Bhutan Mukherji, Bistupada Chatterji, Harendra Ch. Banerji, Jogesh Mitra, Satis, Sarat and Suresh Mitra, Tinkori Das, Siva Hazra, Dasarathi Chatterji, Atul Pal, Monmatha N. Chaudhuri, Kalipada Chatterji, Haripada Adhikari, Bijoy K. Chakravarti, Narendra Nath Bose, Pulin Behari Sirkar, Upendra De, Sailendra K. Das, Sailendra Chatterji, Atul Mukerji, Ganesh Das, Kiran Rai, Monmatha, Bidhubhushan, Narendra and Susil Biswas, Bhupendra N. Banerji, and Lolit M. Chakravarti (approver).]

I IDENTIFY this man. He is Krista Babu, of Sibpur. He came to our villags, and I have been to his house. He spoke to me about committing dacoities and *swadeshi*. He came to our village five or six times and stayed at Dasu's. This is the Krista Babu I referred to in my deposition. This is Krista Mukerji, not Krista Ghose. (Identifies Krista Babu *alias* Bhutu.)

I do not identify this man. (Bejoy K. Chakravarti).

I identify this man (Atul Pal). He is Atul Pal, of Kurchi. He was of our party, and was with us in the Morehal dacoity.

I do not identify this man (Narendra Nath Bose).

I identify this man (Suresh Ch. Mitra). He is Satis Babu, of Kidderpore. I have seen him. He came to the Protapchuk dacoity. I heard his name from Shibu after that dacoity. I saw him nowhere else. I never saw him at Chaudhuripara.

I do not identify this man (Sarat Ch. Mitra).

I identify this man (Pulin Behari Sirkar). He is Pulin Behari Mitra, of Santragachi. I saw him at Chaudhuripara at Krista's house, and I also saw him at Badal De's house at Santragachi. He took me to Badal De's when I was absconding after the Morehal dacoity.

I identify this man (Manmatha N. Chaudhuri). He is Manmatha Nath Chaudhuri of Ghar Bhawanipur. He was with me in the Morehal dacoity.

I identify this man (Kalipada Chakravarti). He is Kalipada Bhattacharji. He was at the Protapchuk dacoity. I also saw him at Chaudhuripara at Krista's house, and at Santragachi, where he lives.

I identify this man (Satis Ch. Mitter). He is brother of Sarat doctor. He is Satis Babu, of Kidderpore. I have seen him at the Protapchuk dacoity. I made a mistake when I said I identified this man (Suresh) as Satis. I meant this man, now shown me. I now see I do not know this man (Suresh). I only saw Satis Babu once on the occasion of the Protapchuk dacoity. Shibu told me he was Sarat doctor's brother.

I identify this man (Bistupada Chatterji.) He is Bistu Babu. He lives at Shibpur. I have seen him at Krista Babu's house two or three times. He took me to see one Kali Babu in an office in Calcutta, after the Morehal dacoity, probably in *Jaista* 1316.

I know this man (Dasarathi Chatterji). He is Dasarathi Chatterji of my village. I have known him all my life. I have told all about him in my deposition before.

I know this man (Bhuban Mukerji). He is Bhuban Mohan Mukerji, of Shibpur, Chaudhuripara. It was his house I used to go to. He is Krista Babu's *bhai*, and lives with him. I have told about him before. He and Nani initiated me into the Secret Society.

I know this man (Tinkori Das). He is Tinkori Ghose. He lives in Diamond Harbour at Mozilpur. I saw him two or three times at Krista Babu's house.

I know this man (Haripada Adhikari). He is Haripada Adhi-

kari of my village. I have known him from my childhood. I have already spoken about him. He went to the Morehal dacoity.

I know this man (Shivapada Hazra). He is Shivapada Hazra, of Kurchi. I have known him from my childhood, I told all about him before.

I know this man (Harendra Ch. Banerji). I do not know his name. He is called. "Master." I met him at Krista Babu's house, after the Morehal dacoity, when I was there I saw him all the time. He used to teach Krista's younger brother and sister's son.

I do not know this man (Bhupendra Nath Banerji).

I know this man (Jogesh Ch. Mitter). He is Jogesh, of Sibpur. He is also called Madaru. I have seen him at Krista's house and Nani Gopal's house ; also at Kurchi. He came there about twice to Sibpu. He also came a third time, when he came to put off the singti-dacoity.

I know this man (Noni Gopal Gupta). He is Nani Gopal Sengupta. He is the head of our society. I saw him in his house at Sibpur and at Krista's. He gave all the orders as to *swadeshi* and dacoity. I only saw him at Sibpur.

I know none of these three (Kiron Ch. Rai, Ganesh Ch. Das, Sailendra Chatterji).

I know this man (Upendra Kumar De) ; he is Badal De, of Santragachi. He was with me at the Protapchuk-Benodebati affair. I saw him at Chaudhuripara at Krista's, and he took me after the Morehal dacoity case, when I was absconding, to his house. I stayed with him. He, Kalipada, and Pulin took me to Santragachi, and I stayed at Badal's.

Dressed as
convict.

I do not know this man (Atul Ch. Mukerji), nor these—Monmatha Nath Biswas, Narendra Nath Biswas, Sailendra Kumar Das, and Bidhu Bhusan Biswas—nor this man Lolit Mohan Chakravarti. I do not know the man who came with me today (Sushil Biswas).

READ over to witness and admitted correct.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL
28-4-1910

WHEREAS it appears to me necessary to have the statement made to me by the approver Jotindra Nath Hazra verified, I order that the said Jotindra Nath Hazra, now in the new Central Jail in connection with the case Emperor *versus* Lolit Mohan Chakravarti and others under sections 121, etc., and section 400, I.P.C., be handed over to the custody of Babu Sati Prosad Ganguli, Sub-Deputy Magistrate, on 19th May at 6-30 A. M., for a period of not more than five days.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

The 18th May 1910

Additional Magistrate, Howrah

Jotin Hazra, Prosecution Witness No. 4, recalled, on solemn affirmation, on 20th July 1910.

[In the presence of Tara Nath Rai Chaudhury, Suresh Mozumdar, Bibhuti Bhusan Mukherji, Kristapoda Biswas, Narendra Nath Biswas, Nibaran Ch. Mozumdar, Rampoda Mukherji, and Prokriti Nath Mozumdar.]

I do not identify any of these men.

[In the presence of Hem Sen, Indu Kiran Bhattacharyya, Chuni Lal Nandi, Rojani Kanta Bhattacharyya, Norendra Nath Bhattacharyya, Kartick Dutt, Bhusan Ch. Mitter, Haridas Chakravarty, Jotindra Nath Mukherji, Annoda Rai, Bimola Deb, and Sirish Sirkar.]

I identify this man Bhusan Chandra Mitter. I have seen him at Noni Gopal Gupta's house and at the house of Bhuban Babu two or three times. He had no talk with me, but was talking to Noni Babu.

I know this man. He is Haridas Chakravarty. I saw him once at Bhuban's house. I was sitting there, and he came and asked if Bhuban Babu was at home and then went off. Bhuban's younger brother or nephew said he was not at home. I know no more about him.

(Sd.) H. P. DUVAL

JUDGMENT OF THE SPECIAL TRIBUNAL IN THE KHULNA
CONSPIRACY CASE, DELIVERED ON TUESDAY,
30TH AUGUST 1910.

[JUSTICES HARRINGTON, HOLMWOOD AND DASS] *

THE prisoners in this case stand charged under section 121A of the Indian Penal Code. It is the case for the Crown that there exists a widespread conspiracy to effect a revolution by violence and by force of arms to deprive the King of the sovereignty of British India.

The allegation is that 13 persons who now stand in the dock are participators in that conspiracy, and to justify the inference that the conspiracy exists and that the persons who have been placed upon their trial before us are engaged in that conspiracy, the Crown rely upon certain facts.

The first important fact upon which the Crown relies is that there was found in the possession of some prisoner a trunk containing documents advocating revolution by violence, describing how some societies to that end should be organised and the lines upon which they should carry out their operations ; how high explosives were to be manufactured and how, when prepared, they could be most readily employed for the purpose of murder and the destruction of persons. All the prisoners, it is said, were in close association with these in whose possession these documents were found, and with each other, and are found to be pursuing lines of action laid down in the documents which were discovered in their possession. For example, the minds of persons peaceful and contented were to be inflamed by seditious writings, by songs and by speeches, and from the prisoners, it is alleged, emanated seditious writings, seditious speeches, seditious literature directed to the end laid down in the documents found in their possession. Further, bands of men were to be organised for the purpose of actively propagating the doctrines of revolution, and those bands were to be trained to warlike exercises and to undergo physical drill and instructions in the use of weapons. It is said that the prisoners were parties to these organisations or were members of such

bands, and that amongst these bands seditious speeches were made and the youth of the country who were attracted to them were trained to physical exercise and sword drill, so that they may take their part in the revolution or force which it was intended at some future time to bring about. Funds were collected for the purpose of propagating the doctrine of the conspirators and for the collection of arms and ammunition. These funds were to be collected by the association themselves, or were to be collected by robberies committed on the peaceable inhabitants of the country. It is alleged that the prisoners were parties to various robberies or attempts to rob ; and, lastly, the Crown rely on the fact that the correspondence and documents found in possession of the various prisoners disclosed that they were engaged on some secret design which they were unable to express openly ; and it is contended that the literature in the possession of the prisoners and the acts done by them point to the one conclusion, and that is that they were parties to the design which is charged against them in the indictment.

Now, with regard to the evidence which has been placed before us. The first piece of evidence which we think it right to refer to is the statement of one of the accused persons—Aboni. This man was arrested on 2nd September, and on the 13th September he made a statement to a Magistrate named Komode Nafh Mukerji. In that statement he implicated himself and a large number of persons in the conspiracy which is charged against the prisoners, and out of the number that he implicated, he implicated eight persons who now stand charged. Later on, in company with another Magistrate, he went to the various points which he had referred to in his statement, and pointed out various places which had been scenes of different incidents to which he referred ; and later still, before the Magistrate, he made depositions against his co-accused in certain proceedings which were instituted against them under section 395 and under section 400 of the Indian Penal Code. While in jail he had communication with another person who was in the jail, a man named Lolit, and he intimated in that communication that he intended to withdraw what he said when he came to be called as a witness

in the trial of the persons against whom he had made depositions before the Magistrate, and when as witness he retracted what he had said, and suggested that what he had said had been taught him by the late Shamsul Alum. Shamsul Alum was murdered in January. The communications which Aboni held with Lolit were in February, and it is a very striking and significant fact that in the communications with Lolit so soon after that murder there is no suggestion that the late Inspector taught this man anything. That appears to us to be pure after thought, and the suggestion is made by Aboni because the man against whom it is made cannot be called to contradict it. It is clear to us that the statement made by Aboni in the presence of the Magistrate, Komode Nath Mukerji, was a perfectly voluntary and honest statement and that, with the statement made before the other Magistrate and his depositions, can be regarded at any rate as evidence against Aboni himself. That is the first part of the evidence on which the Crown relies.

Another piece of evidence—and to our mind a most important piece of evidence—in the case is the discovery of the documents in the possession of the principal persons amongst the accused. Now, these documents were discovered at No. 15, Jorabagan Street, on the occasion of a search made in the rooms there occupied by Bidhu, Aswini and Brojendro on the 2nd of September. In the trunk which was found there were documents which in the ordinary course of things would have been the property of the different persons who were found together in that room. The trunk was locked, the key was in the tin and was pointed out to the search party by Aswini. The trunk being unlocked, there was found in it amongst a great number of documents two sets of documents which were of the first importance—one was three small paper books entitled the *Mukhti Khone Pathe* and the other was a set of documents which may be described shortly as “confidential exhibits.” Now, the *Mukhti Khone Pathe* consisted of a reprint of articles originally published in a seditious newspaper called the *Yugantar*. These articles, amongst other matters, in supporting the view that there should be a revolution pointed out that a revolution has to be

prepared for in two definite stages—one is the formation of public opinion, and the other is (to use the words of the writer) “by brute force and the collection of arms.” The *Mukhti Khone Pathe* goes on to show how public opinion is to be got, and it recommends publication in newspapers, music, literature, preaching, the formation of secret meetings and secret associations. The second branch of the preparation for revolution, namely, by brute force and the collection of arms, is also dealt with, and the paper sets out that arms must be purchased by money collected to that end by robbery. Further, that bombs should be prepared, and that the attention of the youth of the country should be directed at the attainment of physical strength for the coming struggle.

That, therefore, briefly is the more important portion of the part played. Then there are the other documents which we have referred to as confidential exhibits. In those exhibits are to be found the details as to the organisation of secret societies. There are to be found instructions of how high explosives and bombs are to be manufactured, and the instructions are illustrated with beautifully executed pencil drawings, which must have been made by a draftsman of very considerable skill. There is no evidence as to when the *Mukhti Khone Pathe* was published, but the confidential exhibits contain internal evidence that a portion of them at least has come into existence since April 1908. In that month an attempt was made to murder the Mayor and Mayoress of Chandernagore by throwing a bomb into the room in which they were sitting. Mercifully it failed to explode, but a reference in one of the confidential documents to this abortive attempt and a discussion of the reason why that bomb did not go off establish clearly that that particular document has come into existence since that attempt was made.

Now, those were the most important documents found in the possession of the persons at Jorabagan Street, and on the occasion of the search the documents when found were signed by the prisoner Bidhu, who explained that he took that precaution to guard against any document being interpolated by

evil-minded persons. Now, to meet the difficulty in which the accused find themselves in the production of these extremely incriminating documents, it was argued by the defence that what were described as "confidential exhibits" were brought to 15, Jorabagan Street, on the day previous to the search by a person named Jogi Rai. That Jogi Rai was a police spy, and, though I do not say it was stated in express terms, I gathered the insinuation was that those documents were put there by the police spy for the purpose of getting these persons into trouble. It becomes necessary to examine carefully the evidence to see if there is any foundation for such a suggestion or not. But before dealing with the evidence one is bound to make the observation that the "confidential exhibits" in a very remarkable way form what may be called the complement to what is to be found in the *Mukhti Khone Pathe*. The *Mukhti Khone Pathe* directly advises in strong terms the organisation of bands ; the confidential exhibits give the details of the manner in which these bands are to be organised. The *Mukhti Khone Pathe* recommends "bombs" ; the confidential exhibits show how they are to be manufactured ; and in short, the confidential exhibits would enable those who study them to carry out the general directions which are to be found in the *Mukhti Khone Pathe*.

Now, to establish the suggestion that these documents were something separate from those which belong to the prisoners, it was first sought to make out that they were tied up together in a bundle by themselves. Out of the three witnesses, the two officers engaged in the search were cross-examined on this point, and they were both confident that these documents were not tied up in a separate bundle. The third, the independent witness, was not asked any question on this point. Now, if it were true that these documents contained matters unknown to the prisoners and had been brought by another man the night before, one would have expected a statement to that effect to be made at the time. No such statement appears to have been made, and, moreover, if it had been the desire to preserve evidence of such a suggestion, it was within the power of Bidhu

to have recorded that statement. He was supplied with pen and ink, and his name was affixed to each document as it was produced. It is impossible to believe, if these documents stood apart from the other papers found in this trunk, that Bidhu would not have made some endorsement to that effect, but as it is, they are treated in precisely the same way as all the documents which are found in the trunk. And, moreover, it is a significant fact, with regard to the knowledge of the contents, that in some documents, namely, those which give the illustration of the bombs, the signature appears in close juxtaposition to the pictures and description to be found in that document. Further, there is no evidence at all that Jogi Rai or any stranger came to these rooms the evening before, and it appears that the first time it was suggested that these documents had been brought by Jogi Rai was in the statement made by Bidhu on the 8th September—six days after.

Taking all these facts into consideration and especially in view of the fact that these documents were treated by Bidhu just as the other documents found in the trunk, we have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the find was a perfectly genuine one, and that these documents were, like the other documents in the steel trunk, in the joint possession of the persons who had occupation of 15, Jorabagan Street.

The next branch of the case to which it is necessary to refer is the evidence of association. It is unnecessary at this stage to discuss that evidence. It consists in letters found in the possession of the different prisoners ; in a diary found in the house of Bidhu, and in the mass of oral evidence, but it is unnecessary to discuss it because no serious attempt has been made by the defence to deny that these persons were in fact in association as alleged by the Crown, but what the defence say is that they were related and that the two Nogens and Kalidas were all inhabitants of Shodipore and they were therefore fellow-villagers, and it is pointed out that, with the exception of Comira and Jaga, all the villages are within moderate distance of each other, from which it is to be inferred, and it is contended, that that association was a natural and innocent associa-

tion of persons who come from the same part of the country and were in some cases related to one another. Well, now, the statement of Aboni, the possession of the documents to which we have referred, and the association of the prisoners who were in possession of those documents lead us to the conclusion that the Crown has established that a conspiracy existed, having for its aims the objects stated in the charge, and it now becomes necessary to see how far the evidence affects the particular prisoners who stand in the dock as indicating that they are implicated in this design, and the first piece of evidence that we have to consider is the statement of Aboni to which we have referred a short time ago. Now, it is argued on behalf of the Crown that that statement comes within section 10 of the Evidence Act, and is therefore to be treated as evidence against Aboni's fellow-prisoners, and it is said that if it does not fall within section 10, at any rate it falls under the provisions of section 30 ; it is the confession of one co-accused and may be referred to in the course of the trial.

It is argued by Mr. Roy with very considerable force that in any case its value can be no higher than that of a statement of an accomplice and, indeed, that it has less value than the statement of an accomplice, because an accomplice can be placed in the witness-box and can be cross-examined for the purpose of testing his accuracy, while this confession made by Aboni is made when he is one of the persons to be tried, and therefore it cannot be tested in the witness-box by cross-examination. Now, there is of course very great force in that argument, and, further, we come to the conclusion that it could not be treated as evidence under section 10 of the Evidence Act. That section in our view is intended to make evidence communications between the different conspirators while the conspiracy is going on with reference to the carrying out of the conspiracy. No doubt section 10 is wider than the law of England in respect of the evidence in conspiracy, but we do not think that that section was intended to make evidence the confession of the co-accused and to put it on the same footing as communication passing between conspirators, or between a conspirator and other persons with

reference to the carrying out of a conspiracy. But with regard to section 30, in our view, it being the confession of a co-accused, it can be looked at under that confession, but its value is discounted by the fact that it cannot be tested by cross-examination, and we should not think for a moment of putting it on any higher ground than a statement of an accomplice, or in any way be influenced by the statements in it except where those statements are corroborated by independent testimony implicating the accused persons in the design with which they are charged. But with regard to Aboni himself not only is the statement evidence against him but the statement which he has made in what is termed a verification and the deposition he made before the Magistrate are all matters of evidence against him. The question as to whether the confession was made voluntarily was dealt with a short time ago, and we need only observe that it is impossible for any person to read the letters which passed from Aboni to Lolit when those persons were in custody without being led to the conclusion that that statement that Aboni made as to the existence of a conspiracy and his part therein were true and were perfectly voluntary. In our view the evidence against Aboni is complete, and it is unnecessary for the purpose of dealing with his individual case to go into the oral evidence which was given against him.

Then the next most important person amongst those in the dock is Bidhu. Now Bidhu was arrested at 15, Jorabagan Street, on the 2nd of September in possession of gravely incriminating documents to which we have referred, and in considering whether his occupation of that house where these documents were found is innocent, it is a very curious and significant fact that he does not use in his correspondence the address of 15, Jorabagan Street : on the contrary, he uses an address in Ahiritolla Street, the address of a house belonging to the gentleman in whose employ Kalidas, one of the prisoners, was. Bidhu was not singular in using that address, because the other persons who were with him in occupation of the room in 15, Jorabagan Street, all used the Ahiritolla Street address, and had apparently the same motive for concealing the address in 15, Jorabagan

Street. Then there is the evidence that Bidhu was in association with Aboni and with Brojo—indeed, he was living with him when he was arrested, with Kalidas, with Satish, with Aswini, with Sudhir and with Kini Poi; and further, when Bidhu's house was searched, a diary was found which contains a mysterious reference to some enterprise which involves the sacrifice of all home ties, relations, and so on—a severance apparently from all domestic relations.

Then there is another matter which we will only touch upon shortly. It relates to the movements of Bidhu about the time when, according to the statement of Aboni in his confession, there was an assembly of persons for the purpose of committing a dacoity at Nangla. According to Aboni the conspirators assembled at a place called Janakachia and they assembled there on the 13th of August, intending to go to Nangla and carry out this robbery. In Bidhu's diary there appears a statement that he went on the 12th to Giahat, on the 13th to Myapore, on the 14th to Bogra, and on the 15th he came to Burgapore. There is the evidence of the zamindar's *naib* and the postmaster of Aya-pore that Bidhu was at Janakachia on the 13th, and that he came to the post-office at Burgapore, near Pikepara, for the purpose of cashing a money-order. The postmaster's statement seems important because the documents had reference to the money-order, and the monies in respect to it are produced, and from that it appears that Bidhu was away on the 12th and that he came over and got the cash on the 13th. All this appears to us to amount to this that, excepting the evidence as to Bidhu's movements on the days to which we have referred, it would appear that the entries made in the diary do not disclose the real movements of the people at that time, and would lead to the conclusion that for some purpose or other he desired that no person in whose hands the diary might subsequently fall should know that he had been at Janakachia. That, however, is perhaps the less important part of the evidence against Bidhu. There is the possession of the documents, the concealment of the address, the association with the conspirator Aboni, which is quite sufficient in our view to establish that

Bidhu himself was a party to the agreement that had been come to.

The next man is Aswini, and he also is one of the party who was arrested at No. 15, Jorabagan Street, and he produced the key of the trunk in which the incriminating documents were found, and in our view was equally responsible with Bidhu for the possession of those documents. He, like Bidhu, uses an address which was not the place he was residing in. When his house was searched a dagger was found on the premises, and he is in association with Bidhu, with Brojen and with other members of the conspiracy. There are letters which passed between him, Nogen, Kalidas, and a man named Haripada, who at present has not been arrested, which lead us to the conclusion that he with these persons was concerned in the collection of arms. In our view he is as much implicated in the conspiracy as are the other persons with whom he appears, namely, Bidhu and Aboni.

Then, there comes Kalidas, who was employed at 165, Ahiritolla Street, and this was the address which was used by the persons who occupied 15, Jorabagan Street, where the incriminating papers were found. Now, Kalidas is shown on the correspondence to have been concerned in selling a revolver to a man named Haripado to whom we have just referred. He is shown to be corresponding with the Nogens and Bidhu, and his name appears in Bidhu's diary as one of the persons who was associated with him, and Bidhu's diary, it must be borne in mind, is a document which indicates that some unexplained design was on hand in which Bidhu and the persons associated with him were interested. There is oral evidence of the association of Kalidas with Aboni ; further, with Nogen, with Satish and with Brojendro. With those last three persons he was one of a party who was in the habit of visiting Bidhu's house at Pikepara, and he was also in the habit of visiting Aboni, Bidhu and Satish when they resided at 61, Mirzapore Street. Amongst his other associates, too, was Aswini. who was one of the party who was then at 15, Jorabagan Street. There is therefore association with persons who were undoubtedly engaged in a

conspiracy ; there is the address of the place in which Kalidas was employed which is used for the benefit of the persons who were associating at 15, Jorabagan Street, and there is the deal in firearms.

It is argued by Mr. Roy that the deal in firearms should be held to be a private transaction on the part of Kalidas carried out for his own personal benefit, but when the transaction is looked at in the light of the correspondence with the different persons who are said to be engaged in this conspiracy, we think the theory that it was a private business outside what they were engaged in would not be justified, and we have no doubt that Kalidas was engaged in procuring of firearms which was one of the lines of action laid down in the documents relating to the conspiracy which was found at 15, Jorabagan Street.

Next comes Nogen Chandra Chandra. He is one of those who was found in association with Aboni, with Bidhu, with Aswini and with Kalidas. This association is proved not only by the oral testimony of witnesses who have been called, but by the numerous letters which have been discovered on the search of the premises occupied by the different prisoners. He was one of a party which was in the habit of visiting the house of Bidhu at Pikepara, to which place he, Brojo, Kalidas and Satish resorted. He was one of those who visited 61, Mirzapore Street, when occupied by Satish, Aboni, and Brojen, and further he is shown in association with Nogen Sircar and Aboni, who were persons in the habit of visiting Jogen. The evidence of association, therefore, with regard to Nogen is overwhelming, and a further fact which connects him with the conspiracy and makes it impossible to say that this association was the innocent association of friends consists in the discovery of a mass of seditious literature of which Nogen Chandra Chandra was the author. A mass of writings is found in the handwriting of Nogen Chandra, and it was stated in the course of the case that some of these writings had been published in a periodical. In our view Nogen Chandra Chandra is a party to the conspiracy charged, his particular *role* being the dissemination of seditious writings, which is one of the lines on which public opinion is to

be formed as recommended by the authors of the *Mukhti Khone Pathe*.

The next man we have to deal with is Sachindra Lal Mitter. In his case there is evidence of association both with Bidhu and with Aboni, and it is shown that he was a prominent member of one of the bands which are described as a "Samiti" to which the prisoners belonged. There are respectable witnesses who, being present at the meeting of the Samiti, depose to the nature of the speeches they heard Sachindra make. We see no reason to doubt that the evidence they have given is substantially true and Sachindra was one of those who occupied himself at those meetings in preaching the doctrines which the conspirators desired him to promulgate. Now, amongst the other witnesses who speak to Sachindra there is a man who was the postmaster and head-panchayat at Comira. He speaks to Sachindra as an active member of the Samiti, and it is a very significant fact that at first this gentlemen attended the meetings and only withdrew on learning that there were secret meetings held under the wing of the Samiti, and that the object of those secret meetings was to effectuate a treasonable conspiracy. That he learnt from a man who is described as one of the principal persons of the Samiti. Well now, the result of his withdrawal appears to have been that threats were made against him, and he seems to have reason for supposing that his life was in some danger.

For the defence it was suggested that these were not threats but friendly warnings. Whether threats from a foe or the warnings of a friend, in either case they seem to us to throw a very significant light on what was being carried on under the wing of the Samiti.

The learned counsel for the Crown attacked the courage of this witness, we think, rather unreasonably. On the contrary, although the man appeared to have reason to suppose that he was incurring some personal danger, in our view he showed no lack of courage in sticking to his post at the village in which he resides and in carrying out his duty as a man, notwithstanding the threats which had been made against him. Further, Sachindra's position with regard to the association appears in a

diary found in the possession of Bidhu, or, rather, found in Bidhu's house when that place was searched on the 2nd of September. That document contains a statement of how the writer had (to use his own expression) "on arrival at Alka met everyone," and then he gives a list of the names, including a man named Sudha, and narrates how in their opinion it was not well done by going to Comira with Jogin or to give so much authority to Sachin. "This authority, however, did not commend itself to me, for it is not well worked and may be spoilt by reason of the authority." "Sachindra was also a man fond of asserting his authority." That statement in Bidhu's diary corresponds well with the oral evidence as to the position of Sachindra in respect of the Samiti, where he is described as a prominent member and a man who makes seditious speeches. We have no doubt that Sachindra is party to the conspiracy charged.

[The Advocate-General here interrupted, saying it was not he who spoke of the witness's courage to which their Lordships had referred to.

His Lordship Mr. Justice Harington said he remembered the incident very well, and their Lordships had observed it to each other at the time.]

The next case we have to consider is that of Nogen Sircar. He is shown to be a member of the *Samiti* in association with the other persons who have been shown to belong to the conspiracy. The correspondence shows that he was engaged together with Kalidas in dealing in arms, and the letter passing between him and Haripado contains a clear reference to the revolver which is said to have been procured by Kalidas. And then further on the correspondence there are some very significant letters referring to what is described as "jhama." The defence say that this *jhama* refers to that which the word means in its ordinary sense, that is to say, a coat, and it is said that this particular coat referred to was comparatively a costly article which was used in theatrical entertainments. Now, a letter was found on the 8th August which bears the post-mark of the 8th of August, and contains the intimation that Bidhu was in want

of a *jhama*. It is a letter written to Nogen Sircar, and it was stated by one of the witnesses to have been in the hand of Kalidas ; but whether in the hand of Kalidas or not it is sent to Nogen Sircar, and it refers to this *jhama* : "You shall keep the *jhama* with you. When Bidhu Babu goes there and asks you for the *jhama* give it to him, for he has no *jhama*. Till he sees you do not part with possession of the *jhama*." Now that is on the 8th of August. On the 18th of August there is another letter which refers to the *jhama*. That is signed by Bidhu and addressed to Nogen, "at that time I shall give you your *jhama*," and it contains the passage "What about your theatre," which is the foundation, we say, of saying that the *jhama* referred to is a theatrical coat. These letters show that for some reason or another Bidhu had need of a *jhama* on the 8th or 9th of August, and that that need had come to an end on the 18th of August or 19th of August, and that he was ready to return the *jhama* to Nogen.

Now, it is said by the Crown that the *jhama* means a revolver or weapon of some sort. It certainly is a remarkable fact that a dacoity did take place on the night of the 15th or 16th August in which a revolver would have been of use to Bidhu, for he was concerned in that transaction. Well, there is nothing on the correspondence or in Bidhu's diary to show that on any of those days he was engaged in any theatrical performance from which it may be inferred that he had need of a theatrical coat : so far from the diary containing any indication that there was any performance of that sort, if it could be accepted as accurate to that extent, it would show that there was not any such performance. The circumstances go to indicate that, if the oral testimony is true, Bidhu was one of those who assembled at Janakachia just previous to the dacoity ; that Nogen was dealing in an article which would have been useful to Bidhu if he was in favour of this transaction, and that article cannot be explained by a theatrical coat, but it is far more probable that it does refer, as Aboni says, to a revolver or some other thing of violence. The result of the evidence of his association, coupled with the evidence which shows that there was a deal in fire-

arms by this man with the other conspirators, lead us to the conclusion that he was implicated in this conspiracy. But while we have come to the conclusion that he knew and assented to the design in respect of which he is indicted, we think he ought to be given the benefit of the statement made in respect of him by Aboni from which we have been able to infer that he was not one of what may be called the inner ring, comprising the more important and more efficient of the conspirators.

The next man to be considered is Kennu Poi. He is shown to have been an associate of Sudhir, Bidhu, Aswini and Aboni. He was a prominent member of the Samiti or Akhara, and he appears to have been a person of considerable physical vigour because he is described as leading an attack on the foreign goods which were exposed for sale in the market. His particular duty or line appears to have been the teaching of *lathi*-play for the purpose of improving the physique of those who were members of the Samiti. There is the evidence of a man named Nibaran, which we think ought to be accepted, that he was one of the party who assembled at Janakachia just before the Nangla dacoity, and the circumstances of his position in the Samiti, of the line of action which he followed, and the association with the persons to whom we have referred, induce us to come to the conclusion that he was in agreement with the others with regard to the object ultimately to be attained by these persons ; but we think he falls into the same rank as the man that we have last dealt with, and does not occupy so important a place in the ranks of the conspiracy as are filled by the first six persons with whom we have dealt.

Next, there is the case of Sudhir Kumar De. Sudhir was also an active member of the Samiti, and he was a person who was occupied in the physical training of the young men who came under the influence of this *Samiti*. He was a prominent teacher of *lathi*-play and physical exercise, and he was in association with Bidhu and Aswini, with Aboni and with Kennu Poi. His name appears in the diary of Bidhu as one of a party with whom he was associating. The oral testimony as to his work in promoting the physical training of young men in asso-

ciation with other persons we found to be members of a conspiracy, his association with those persons, and the reference to him in Bidhu's diary show that he should be placed in the same category as the last two persons, namely, as one of those who is in agreement with the conspiracy but occupies a subordinate position in it.

There remain two persons — Brajen and Satish Chatterjee.

Now, with regard to the first, the matter against him, which is more serious, is that he was arrested at 15, Jorabagan Street, and that he, like the other conspirators, used the Ahiritolla Street address to conceal his residence at the other address. He is shown to have been in association with Sudhir, with Aboni, with Kennu Poi, Nagen Chandra, with Kalidas and with Satish, but at the same time the evidence does not point to his having taken any very active share in the carrying on of the lines of action which are laid down in the conspiracy. At the same time it is impossible to believe that he could have been in association with these persons, and have lived with the principal conspirators at 15, Jorabagan Street, and have had access — which we conclude he had — to the trunk because documents belonging to him were in it, without knowing and approving the designs of the persons with whom he lived, and if he knew and approved of these designs, then he is guilty of conspiracy within the meaning of the section under which he stands charged.

Satish is also shown to be in association with Brojen, Kalidas, Nogen Chandra, Abon. and Bidhu, and he was one of that party that used to visit the house of Bidhu in company with the other persons who are concerned in the conspiracy. It appears from Bidhu's diary that Satish was one of those who formed a party of which Bidhu was a member, and he is stated by a police constable to have been seen in close neighbourhood of a boat which was alleged to have been conveying the persons who had committed the dacoity at Nangla away from the scene of their operations. With regard to this evidence of identification, although it is perhaps not very strong evidence, we think at any rate that it was *bonafide* and we think so for this reason : if the constable desired to come and say that which

was untrue for the purpose of benefiting himself as an active officer, or for getting the prisoners into trouble, it would be perfectly easy for him to identify more persons in that boat. The circumstance that he identified this man as getting out for a particular purpose seems to us to show that at any rate the constable was *bonafide* in the evidence which he gave with respect to Satish. Then, there is another circumstance which appears in Bidhu's diary which seems to us to indicate without any doubt that he belonged to a party of these conspirators. Bidhu in his diary laments the conduct of Satish who was engaged with him in some mysterious enterprise, and he laments the conduct of Satish in indulging in some immoral habits and acting in a way which was at any rate undesirable, and rather strikingly discusses whether this conduct shall not make him give up all the business, and then he comes to the conclusion that he has sacrificed so much, he must stick to it notwithstanding. It is very difficult to read that part of the diary without seeing that Bidhu is referring to those who associated with him in the work upon which he had embarked, and is lamenting the conduct of a particular man, Sachindro, which would bring discredit on the whole party. In our view Satish was a party to the agreement, and comes within the terms of the section.

Well, now we have to consider the evidence in respect of the two other persons—Mohini and Monmotho. Mohini is shown to be a member of the conspiracy, but it is singular that the speeches with which he is credited are in themselves comparatively harmless, and if we regarded as established that he had said what he is alleged to have said, those speeches would hardly come within the lines laid down by the *Mukhti Khone Pathe* or the confidential exhibits. There is a letter amongst the correspondence which one may say would arouse suspicion against Mohini, but it is a letter written so long ago as the month of January 1907, and we do not think it would be right to press that letter of years ago against Mohini. Now, the oral evidence to implicate him in the conspiracy happens to be that of certain witnesses whose evidence with respect to Mohini, at any rate we think, should be received with very great caution,

and it is very significant that he is not mentioned at all by Aboni. That he was in association with Aswini has been established, but then, on the other hand, it is equally shown that he was a relation of Aswini's, and therefore the association with Aswini cannot be pressed against him without something further to show that the association was in respect of the conspiracy. It was stated that he was associated with Bidhu, but when the oral evidence on that point comes to be examined it appears to be only that of a witness who stated that he was in association with Bidhu, and therefore cannot be taken as evidence of association. We have given the best consideration we can with regard to the evidence relating to Mohini, and we think there is in this case that element of doubt which renders it right that he should be acquitted on the charge which has been made against him.

Then, with regard to Monmotho, the evidence against him is considerably weaker than that which has been given against the other accused. The principal witness against him was a man named Motilal who told a very singular story about his coming out for the purpose of collecting mangoes or for watching his mango trees and his meeting with Monmotho and the statements which Monmotho made implicating himself in the conspiracy and in various thefts or robberies which were carried out by the conspirators. Well, we do not think the evidence of that witness can be for one moment relied upon, and if he had done all that is alleged by that witness that he had, it seems to us quite impossible that he could have escaped from Aboni, whereas we see from the deposition, that Aboni does not seem to be acquainted with Monmotho.

There is one matter which we must refer to as being a point in verification, and that was the pointing out of the house of Monmotho as the place where some of these persons collected on the occasion of their going to carry out one of their robberies ; but the significant matter with regard to that is that when the courtyard of that house was used, it is apparent that Monmotho Nath was not there at the time, and that circumstance, I think, indicates that he was not a person who

was acquainted with the designs of the conspirator and who was accepted by them as one of their associates. He therefore must be acquitted.

Bearing in mind that the offence charged is complete when the facts are told from which it could be inferred that there is an agreement come to for the purpose of carrying out the objects stated in the charge, and bearing in mind the nature of the documents found in the possession of some of the prisoners and the fact that the prisoners in association with them are doing acts which in fact promote the objects laid down in those documents, we are satisfied that the charge has been made out in respect of the eleven prisoners with whom we dealt in the earlier part of our judgment.

With regard to the sentence which we are bound to inflict, we shall avail ourselves of the provision which is to be found in section 121A, which permits transportation to be awarded for periods shorter than that for which transportation is permitted in other cases. With regard to the prisoners Aboni, Aswini, Kalidas, Nogen Chandra Chandra, Sachindra and Bidhu, we have come to the conclusion that these persons are the most deeply implicated and the most prominent members of the conspiracy which we have had to investigate. At the same time the fact that they have not been shown to have carried out their operations to the length which has been disclosed in other cases of conspiracy of a similar nature which have recently been tried justifies us, we think, in passing a less severe sentence than the Court was bound to pass in other cases which have been brought before it. But at the same time the sentence must be a severe one and these persons must be removed from the scene of their criminal activity for a considerable period.

The sentence which we pass on Aboni Bhusan Chuckerbutty, Bidhu Bhusan De, Aswini Kumar Bose, Nogensandra Chandra Chandra, Kalidas Ghose and Sachindra Mitter is that they be each of them transported for a period of seven years. In the case of Aboni that sentence will be concurrent with a sentence which he is at present suffering in respect of a dacoity carried out in pursuance of this conspiracy. With regard to the three

persons, Nogendra Nath Sircar and Sudhir Kumar De and Kennu Poi, who, we consider, occupied a less prominent position in the conspiracy, the sentence which we award is that they, each of them, be transported for a period of five years. The next two men, Brojendro Kumar Dutta and Satish Chandra Chatterji, who in our opinion occupied even a less important part in the conspiracy than the other persons to whom we have referred, but who yet were parties to the agreement which was come to, we direct that they, and each of them, be transported for three years. The remaining two persons, Mohini Mohan Mitter and Monmotho Nath Mitter, we acquit and direct that they be discharged.

EMPEROR

Versus

LALIT MOHUN CHUCKERBUTTY, AND OTHERS .

JENKINS, C. J.

Forty-six accused have been committed to this Court for trial under section 6 (b) of Act XIV of 1908, and the charges against them are under sections 121-A, 122 and 123 of the Indian Penal Code.

Of these the principal charge is that under section 121-A, of conspiracy to wage war against His Majesty the King-Emperor, and deprive the King-Emperor of the sovereignty of British India, and to overawe by means of criminal force, or show of criminal force, the Government of India, as by law established. The charges under the other sections are subsidiary, and have not been discussed before us. The period of the conspiracy, as charged, is "between the Christian years 1905 and 1910, both inclusive," and the accused are charged with having conspired at Sibpur in the district of Howrah, and at other places in British India.

Of the 46 accused so charged, Bhuban Mukherjee is alleged to be of unsound mind, and consequently incapable of making his defence, and an application has been made to us, under section 465 of the Criminal Procedure Code. As against him

we have directed an adjournment of the trial subject to any objection that may be taken on his behalf.

The accused Satish Chandra Mitter and Haripodo Adhikari have been discharged for want of jurisdiction, by reason of the failure of the prosecution to observe the provisions of section 196 of the Criminal Procedure Code. The accused Bimola Deb has been acquitted at the instance of the prosecution, on the ground that there was no case against him.

The case against Kiran Rai has been dropped, not for lack of evidence, but because his mental condition appeared to be such that the prosecution against him could not properly be continued ; and, in adopting this course, Mr. P. L. Roy was influenced, and properly influenced, by the fact that this accused had already been sentenced to eight years rigorous imprisonment for the Haludbari dacoity, which is alleged to be a part of this conspiracy.

Counsel for the Crown also determined not to proceed with the prosecution against Jotindra Nath Mukherjee and Nibaran Mozumdar *alias* Karuda, as the relevant evidence he was able to adduce against them was not sufficient to support a conviction.

The case for the prosecution is that the accused were members of a vast conspiracy, organized and working in secrecy, and aiming at the overthrow of the British Government : that though the period of the conspiracy mentioned in the charge was between 1905 and 1910, both inclusive, the movement commenced earlier ; that the principal centres of the conspiracy were Calcutta, Sibpur, Kidderpore, Nattore, Hooghly, Bankura, Midnapore, and Jessore : that the scheme of the conspiracy required the collection of men, arms and money, and that an actual start in this direction was made ; that men were recruited and arms and ammunition collected : that to obtain funds, dacoities were committed and *swadeshi* shops were started. As a part of the conspiracy, it is said, many crimes were committed, for the prosecution would ascribe to the conspiracy a number of dacoities attempted or committed, the murder of two police officers and one informer, the endeavour made to seduce

troops from their allegiance, and other minor offences. Many of these offences have actually been the subject of judicial investigation and adjudication, and several of the accused have already been convicted, acquitted or discharged, in respect of them. Where there has been an acquittal, there has of course been no further discussion, for the acquittal is conclusive, and indeed it would be a very dangerous principle to adopt to regard a judgment of not guilty as not fully establishing the innocence of the person to whom it relates (*Rex versus Plummer*, L. R. 1902, 2 K. B., 339).

In other cases we have been compelled, by the course the prosecution have seen fit to adopt, to hear the evidence again, in proof of these same offences against the same accused. In other instances completed offences, as for instance the Netra Dacoity, have not been made the subject of a separate trial, as they could and should have been, but they have been thrown into this case, and we have had to investigate them in this trial. It may be that this course was inspired by the idea that, though the evidence at the disposal of the prosecution was insufficient to secure a conviction for the crimes committed, it might serve to secure a conviction for a conspiracy, the proof of which really rested on the establishment of these crimes; there can hardly have been the hope that the Court would be willing to suppose much had been proved, merely because much had been said. Of this, however, I am clear, that the course adopted is not to be commended, and though it may be lawful, it unquestionably is not expedient. The result has been this trial, and with every effort to curtail its length, it has lasted, and necessarily lasted, for months, so that from the arrest of most of the accused a year and more has passed. The seriousness of this is the greater when it is borne in mind that, during the whole of that time, almost all the accused have been in custody, and that until the close of the magisterial enquiry, they were unrepresented by any legal advisers as a result of the application to this case of the special procedure provided by Act XIV of 1908, an Act "to provide for the more speedy trial of certain offences." I doubt whether when that Act was passed it could have been

contemplated that a procedure was being sanctioned that would render it possible for accused persons to be incarcerated for months without any access to legal advice.

To establish their case the prosecution called, in the course of the magisterial enquiry, close on 450 witnesses, all of whom and more have been called or tendered in this Court, while the printed exhibits alone cover upwards of 1,100 foolscap pages. The evidence adduced in support of the prosecution's case is in part oral, in part documentary and in part real. The principal and most important oral evidence is that of the approvers Lolit Mohan Chakrabarti and Jotindra Nath Hazra, but admittedly their testimony before it can be acted on must be corroborated in material particulars. The nature and extent of this corroboration is well settled ; there must be corroboration not only as to the crime, but also as to the identity of each one of the accused ; and ordinarily it must proceed from an untainted source. This is no technical rule, but one founded on long judicial experience, and this case affords a striking illustration of its wisdom, as will be made clear when I come to a discussion of the approvers's evidence.

The documentary evidence consists of books, newspapers, accounts, diaries and letters found for the most part at searches made in the course of this case, or of cognate or relevant cases. We also have before us arms and ammunition that the prosecution seek to connect with one or other of the accused. And finally we have the confessions, of which use is sought to be made under section 30 of the Evidence Act against co-accused.

First, then, it has to be seen whether the conspiracy alleged by the prosecution has been proved. Was there a conspiracy "to wage war against His Majesty the King-Emperor and to deprive the King-Emperor of the sovereignty of British India and to overawe by means of criminal force or show of criminal force the Government of India by law established ?" A charge so phrased might, and probably would, to the lay mind, imply a political situation of the gravest character, and it is no doubt partly for this reason that the Legislature has prescribed that a charge of this description shall not be entertained except upon

complaint made by order of, or under authority from, the Governor-General in Council, the local Government, or some officer empowered by the Governor-General in Council in this behalf.

The proceedings in this case have been initiated by complaint made by order of the local Government : with the policy of that order this Court has no concern. I have hesitated much as to whether it could with any show of reason be said that the evidence has disclosed a conspiracy for so serious an end as waging war against His Majesty, and I have hesitated the more when I have borne in mind the class of men arraigned before us as accused, and the arms that have been disclosed, consisting, as they do, for the most part of a few revolvers, some muzzle-loading guns, some antiquated and broken pistols and a handful of arrowheads. Even Lolit when he says that the object was "to make the country independent," adds "there was no immediate hurry." Jotin Hazra seems to have regarded the movement as a means of livelihood, and in proclaiming his repentance he declared that he recognized that all this dacoity business was bad and that he had been worse off since the dacoities than before. Before us he expressed the view that "these dacoities constituted a secret society." Panna Lal who also professes to have been a member of the conspiracy declared in his confession to Mr. Patterson, "all who entered the gang perpetrated swindles in the name of Swadeshi." Here he improved his story. Still the provisions of the law are comprehensive and it does not require very formidable elements either in men or means to satisfy its definition of a conspiracy to wage war. For the conspiracy with which we are concerned no act or illegal commission is necessary ; the agreement of two or more will suffice, so that the determination of the Court that a conspiracy to wage war has been established does not imply, as its terms might suggest, the existence of a serious menace to the constitution or the stability of constituted authority in India. And I think it right to say this in explanation of my conclusion that a conspiracy to wage war has been proved.

So much is made of the evidence of the approvers and so

closely and intimately is the success of the prosecution identified with it, that it will be convenient to discuss its value at the outset.

Of the two principal approvers Lolit is the more important and I will deal with him first. His previous record has nothing to commend it, though he is poor and his family poor, he has frankly admitted that he "has never tried to earn an honest penny." He was arrested in Darjeeling on the 27th of October 1909, and instead of being sent at once to Diamond Harbour, he was kept at Darjeeling "for local enquiry," and did not reach Diamond Harbour until the 2nd November. Then he had interviews with Inspector Shamsul Alum extending over several hours, and though it was understood Lolit was willing to confess even before he left Darjeeling, it was not until the 5th of November that he was taken to the Magistrate to have his confession recorded. No explanation of this delay is forthcoming, and it is a matter both for regret and for comment that the statement recorded by Inspector Shamsul Alum is not forthcoming. No such document could be found. This assurance we, of course, had to accept, but I feel that it might have materially assisted us, had it been possible for the prosecution to place before us either the original record, or a copy of Lolit's first statement to Inspector Shamsul Alum. How such an important document (if it ever existed, and all record of its contents have become lost to the police, it is difficult to understand. That such a statement was recorded seems clear, and Counsel for the prosecution was asked by the Court to produce for our inspection some document from which we could learn what Lolit had said to the Inspector. Though it seemed to me improbable that the police authorities would not have somewhere in their possession either the original or a copy of the statement, Mr. P. L. Roy, after search had been made, informed the Court that he was instructed to say no record of this statement could be found.

Lolit's confession to the Magistrate, Mr. C. C. Chatterji, is a very remarkable statement, and it is the foundation on which practically the whole of this case is built.

For the prosecution it is said that this statement is not a full disclosure of all Lolit knew, and this has to be said, for it is silent as to the many matters to which Lolit has deposed before us. Lolit's successive statements to the recording Magistrate, to the verifying Magistrate, before Mr. Duval, who conducted the enquiry, and finally before this Court, afford so much room for comment that it is difficult to decide where to begin. His evidence-in-chief before this Court was conspicuous for the assurance with which it was given, and the intimate knowledge of the membership and doings of the conspiracy it professed. Offences and outrages that had baffled the detective powers of the police were explained and claimed by him as the work of the conspiracy, and he has painted himself before us as having a considerable hand in the commission or abetment of dacoities, murder and theft. His knowledge of the *personnel* of the conspiracy appeared to be extraordinary; before the enquiring Magistrate he gave the names of over 170 persons, indicating in most instances their residences, and he has told us he was not an important member of the conspiracy, and to the verifying Magistrate he stated in explanation of his inability to give a particular name and address. "the rule of our *S miti* is not to ask the name and residence of any member. On this account I do not know the names and residences of many persons." Nor can the achievement of recounting this list of names and residences be explained by a good memory for facts within his experience, for when confronted in his cross-examination with one of his many inconsistencies all he could say was, "it is possible for me to narrate these facts correctly each time." Under the stress of cross-examination the assurance vanished, though he displayed considerable resource as he was dislodged from one after the other of his former statements. It would take too much time to do more than mention a few of the indications of untrustworthiness his evidence affords. First, there is his denial of the brick-burning letter, which it is difficult to regard as anything but deliberate falsehood. He may have felt he was safe in this denial, for the falsehood was one that could not have been discovered but for the chance that

brought this letter into the possession of the defence, a contingency Lolit could not have foreseen. His ingenious explanation of the letter, when he had to admit its authorship, did not impress me. Then there is the change of his story as to the receipt of Rs. 10 by money-order from Jotin Mukherjee, from which it became necessary to resile when it was discovered that Jotin was at that time at Darjeeling. Next we have him deposing before the Magistrate that he had passed the Entrance Examination from the Diamond Harbour School in 1905 while here he denied that he had made any such statement, and declared that he left when he was promoted to the 2nd class. At one time he says it was his father that paid for his outfit at Darjeeling, at another time that it was Noni Gopal, and when he was confronted with the variation in his story he promptly said both were true.

Then the story of his connection with Benares is remarkable for its changes. At one time he deposes that he went with Horen and Behari Lal, at another that he preceded them : in his examination-in-chief it seemed as though he went there only once, but in cross-examination he escapes from the difficulty this involves by saying there was more than one visit. At one time he says he, Haren and Behari Lal lived in Umbica's house at Benares for a fortnight, at another he says he thinks he never made any such statement : at one time he declares that he returned from Benares in $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 months, at another after working there for 5 months. His story as to his being sent to Dacca for the *Barah loot* is almost as full of contradictions : at one time it is Pabitra and Noni who sent him on this mission, at another Bimola takes Noni's place : at one time he declares that it was while he was living in Indro Nandi's house that he was so sent, although it appears that the dacoity had not then been committed, at another that it was when he returned from Benares in the Autumn of 1908, though the dacoity had then been committed not less than four months before : at one time he was given cartridges and a revolver on this occasion, at another no mention is made of this. Then as to the date of his first coming to Calcutta : before us he declared it was in October

1903 that he first stayed at No. 46, Machua Bazar Street, that he then moved to the premises of the Calcutta High School, No. 66, Nabutolla Lane ; that in Asin or Kartic he was initiated ; that he then went to the *Yugantar* and *Chattra Bhandar* Mess, No. 15-1 or 15-2, Bhowani Charan Dutt's Street ; that on the very day of his initiation he was entrusted with a revolver to make over to Sakharam Ganesh Deoskar, but on the following day, in accordance with instructions, he watched No. 7, Alipur Lane, and followed a man on a bicycle supposed to be carrying money, and that, after staying two or four days at the *Yugantar* and *Chattra Bhandar* Mess, he was sent by Indro Nath Nandi to Cheddapathar. Before the verifying Magistrate, however, he places his visit to Cheddapathar in 1907. It is true that the date in the Magistrate's record appears to have been altered to 1907, but if this alteration was subsequently made, one thing at any rate is clear, the alteration could not have been made by the defence, for the document was in possession of the police and it was only after repeated efforts that Counsel for the defence saw it in the course of the trial in this Court. But more than this, if the alteration was subsequently made, it was one necessitated by Lolit's statement, at the time, for immediately afterwards he says, in the same statement that, after being two months at Cheddapathar, he returned to Calcutta, and he goes on to describe a long conversation he had as to the Changripota dacoity, and the disposal of the proceeds. And seeing that this dacoity was not committed until December 1907, it is at once patent that if 1907 is a later alteration, it was one necessitated by Lolit's own story. But if October 1907 be taken as the date of his arrival, then all the events prior to that which he deposes – and they are both many and important – must have been outside his experience. If, on the other hand, he came in 1906, then the conversation as to the Changripota dacoity on his return, must be a fabrication, and it is difficult to repel the suggestion, very pertinently made, that it was a fabrication in which he was instructed for the purpose of bringing in this dacoity as the work of the conspiracy.

Then there is Lolit's story as to the assistance he gave in

securing the murder of Nando Lal. If Lolit was in Benares in August, then his version as to how he came to know Nando Lal by sight is false, and with that the whole of his story goes by the board. There are other serious difficulties in the way of accepting his evidence on this point, with which I will deal later, and I will now merely allude to the fact that, though he professes to have watched Nando Lal's house under instructions from Noni, the house he pointed out to the verifying Magistrate as Nando Lal's was No. 25, whereas in fact Nando Lal lived in No. 100-2. Then we have Lolit placing the Musapur dacoity in April, and so placing it, not as an isolated event, but for the purpose of accounting for the abandonment of the second Netra attempt, and yet we know that this dacoity was committed on the 27th February. Then we find that, while he claims an intimate knowledge of those who took part in the Netra dacoity, he points out as parties to it two persons who admittedly had nothing to do with it.

I have mentioned here only a few of the many indications which go to show how untrustworthy Lolit is, apart altogether from the discredit that attaches to him as an accomplice or as the worthless character he obviously is. When I come to deal with the details of the case it will be necessary for me to refer to many other such instances, and indeed a close examination of the evidence goes to show that almost all his statements, when capable of being checked, can be shown to be incorrect. There can be no question that Lolit has overdone his part, whatever the reason may be : and if it be said that had he been fabricating a false story he would not have fallen into this error, then I would answer in the words of Lord Brougham :—"This is a very tender argument before a Court, and too doubtful to justify the Court in placing any considerable reliance on it ; for we do find happily for the ends of justice, that men do fall into these inconsistencies, and by means thereof, the fraudulent character of the evidence becomes apparent."

Jotin Hazra, the other approver, it is also urged on behalf of the defence, is apart from his being an accomplice, an untrustworthy witness. There is certainly little in his general cha-

racter to commend him, for he seems to have been a ne'er-do-well, and admits to having been a *ganja* smoker. He is a man of indifferent education, and I was not favourably impressed by him in the witness box. We first meet with Jotin in connection with the Morehal dacoity : he was arrested on the 5th February, on the 6th February he confessed, on the 29th of March he retracted ; he was tried at the Sessions, and in the end he was acquitted on the 1st April 1909. Proceedings were then taken against him under section 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code for bad livelihood on the 29th June 1909, and he was ordered to find sureties on the 17th August. He was not released till the 11th February 1910, as he could not find sureties before, and then instead of going to his own house, he went to Kali Babu, a Police Inspector at Uluberia, and told him he would like to confess. But for a reason which has not been explained, the Inspector instead of taking Jotin Haza to a Magistrate to have his confession recorded, took him to Inspector Shamsul Alum, and left Jotin with him. Jotin says he told all, and Shamsul wrote it down, but we have not been placed in possession of what was so recorded. On the 15th of February 1910 he was arrested in this case, and he made a statement to Mr. Forrest on the 17th, two days later.

The defence have drawn attention to the fact that in reference to the confession in the Morehal case, which was subsequently retracted by him, it was Jotin's contention that he had been tutored to make that confession by Behari Lal, and it is urged that it is significant that he should have made his statement to Mr. Forrest immediately after this same Behari Lal became his surety. Jotin's movements while in custody certainly are deserving of attention. I will start with his being brought to the Presidency Jail, where at the time none of the accused were in custody. He was, however, removed from here to the Alipore Central Jail, where the accused then were. This was a few days before he was required to identify them in the Magistrate's Court, and not only was he removed to the jail where the accused were, but he seems to have eaten and bathed with them. Almost immediately after he had identified the accused, with whom he was

concerned, in the Magistrate's Court, he was removed to another jail. In considering the significance of these moves, it has to be borne in mind that, up to this time, there had been no identification by Jotin. For the defence it is asked, and I think reasonably asked, what is the explanation of all this. None has been vouchsafed, or attempted, and it is difficult to treat the matter as an undesigned coincidence.

This will be a convenient place at which to deal with the confessions.

Reliance has been principally placed on those of the accused Soilen Das and Susil Biswas, and these the prosecution would use not only against the persons making them, but also against the rest of the accused. The warrant for this is to be found in section 30 of the Evidence Act, which provides that, when more persons than one are being tried jointly for the same offence, and a confession made by one of such persons affecting himself and some other of such persons, is proved, the Court may take into consideration such confession as against such other person, as well as against the person who makes such confession. The language of the section is guarded, and the history of this Act leaves me in no doubt that this section was designedly framed in these terms. While admissions, a word which embraces confessions, are by section 21 *relevant*, and may be proved as against the person making them, all that section 30 provides is, that the Court *may* take them into consideration, as against other persons. This distinction of language is significant, and it appears to me that its true effect is, that the Court can only treat a confession as lending assurance to other evidence against a co-accused. Thus to illustrate my meaning, in the view I take, a conviction on the confession of a co-accused alone would be bad in law. This reading of the section appears to me to gain confirmation from the language of section 5.

Further, I think that only can be taken into consideration which is a confession, in the true sense of the term, of the offence for which the persons are then being jointly tried. But, in addition to this, the confessions with which I am now dealing, have been retracted, so that, to place any reliance on them

against the co-accused would be most unsafe (Yasin *versus* King Emperor, Indian Law Reports, 28 Calcutta, 690). Counsel for the defence however has gone further, and maintained before us that, there are points on which the confessions are absolutely false, and that these are points on which honest mistake was not possible.

First I will examine Susil's confession. He was arrested on 7th November 1909, at Beliasishi for the Haludbari dacoity, and he confessed on the following 14th December. He speaks to the presence of Lolit Mohan at Beliasishi 8 or 9 days before the commission of the Haludbari dacoity, which was on the 8th of October 1909, and to his taking two swords away with him. He further speaks to having been initiated by Lolit four months before his confession. But Lolit's deposition is that he was not near Beliasishi at either of those dates, and according to his story he was not in Beliasishi after May. Further than that, Lolit in the witness box never alluded to this alleged initiation, though he was questioned in his examination-in-chief as to initiations performed by him, and mentioned some, particularly those in which he had taken part. So much for Susil's confession.

I now come to Sailen's confessions. To begin with, it is pointed out, that while Sailen in his first confession made on the 29th of October, the day after his arrest, gave the name of Ganesh Chandra Das alone, saying that he did not know the names of all the rest, in his second confession he names all the Calcutta men and Bidhu. This, it is urged, shows an improvement designed to meet the exigencies of the case. Whether this be so or not is not directly material for the purposes of this case. But what has been most vigorously attacked is the third confession made on the 9th and 10th of March after Sailen had been in custody for over four months. In this he purports to give a detailed list of conspirators, even naming 80 men who had not been mentioned by Lolit ; he makes repeated reference to Noni Gopal, he gives an account of the Netra dacoity ; he implicates some of the accused in the Morehal dacoity, and he deals with a number of other matters. Not only has this con-

fession, as well as the two which preceded it, been retracted by Soilen, but a careful consideration of its contents, and a comparison of them with other materials in the case lead me to regard this statement as eminently untrustworthy, and I am unable to place any reliance on it against Soilen's co-accused. Without attempting a critical examination of the whole of this confession, it will suffice to refer to two matters. Towards the end of this confession, he throws in the remark that "Noni Babu never keeps any incriminating thing in his house." Now this he says on the 10th of March 1910, while Noni's house had been searched on a previous date, the 20th of January, and nothing incriminating had been found. Then again Soilen almost immediately after this tells us, in the same confession, about the recovery by Noni of cartridges that had been thrown into the tank. It is conceded for the prosecution that this has reference to an incident of which witnesses named Sur-na Bewa and Jamini speak. And yet, if Jamini is right in placing the occurrence in *Aghran*, i.e., November December, it is difficult to see how Soilen, who was then in custody, could have known of it. This, however, is a matter which I will discuss at greater length when I come to deal with the case against Noni.

For the prosecution it has been suggested that the verification proceedings in this case add a value to the approver's evidence, and the confessions, and may be regarded as corroboration. With this I am unable to agree ; on the contrary I feel that these proceedings are open to much of the criticism to which they have been subjected. I refrain from noticing in detail this criticism, as in the view I take, it is not necessary for the decision of the case, nor do I propose to discuss at length the comments that have been made on the methods of identification, though I regret that no satisfactory explanation has been given either of Jotin's being moved to and from the Alipur Central Jail where the accused were lodged, a matter to which I have already alluded, or of the under-trial prisoners having been photographed in jail by the police, a procedure for which no warrant or justification has been furnished us by Counsel for the prosecution. Action of this class, if left unexplained, even

after challenge in the clearest terms from the defence, is certainly calculated to occasion some degree of anxiety as to the methods employed in this case.

Considerable reliance is placed by Counsel for the prosecution on a series of dacoities committed or attempted, and alleged to be a part of the scheme on which the conspirators embarked. The earliest, according to the prosecution, was a dacoity at the Changripota railway station, committed on the 6th December 1907, and followed by dacoities at Sibpur on the 3rd of April 1908, at Barah on the 2nd of June 1908, and Bighati on the 16th of September 1908. Then, it is said there was an attempted dacoity at Protapchuck on 14th October 1908. On the 29th of November 1908, a dacoity is said to have taken place at Raita, and on the 2nd of December at Morehal. In 1909 dacoities are said to have been committed on the 27th of February at Musapur, on the 23rd of April at Netra, on the 27th of July at Maharajpur, and on the 28th of October at Haludbari.

The incident which has been described as the Changripota dacoity occurred on the 6th of December 1907 ; whether or not it was a real dacoity is not clear, but of this I am convinced, that the evidence does not establish the guilt of the accused Narendra Nath Bhattacharjee and Bhusan Chandra Mitter. Shortly after the occurrence, a magisterial enquiry was held, with the result that the accused then before the Court were discharged. This, no doubt, is not binding on this Court, for the discharge was not equivalent to an acquittal. Still the discharge meant that the Magistrate, after taking the evidence, found that there were not sufficient grounds for committing the accused for trial, and he recorded his reasons for that conclusion. No steps were taken at the time to have this order of discharge set aside, and now, more than three years after the event, we are asked to hold that the complicity of the two accused now before the Court has been established. It is not suggested that further evidence has been adduced : on the contrary, some evidence which was adduced before the Magistrate, and which appears to have been favourable to the accused, has not been placed before us. The evidence actually

placed before us is open to considerable comment, and this, together with the circumstances to which I have alluded, in my opinion clearly requires that we should hold the guilt of Noren Bhattacharjee and Bhusan Mitter not proved, and connection of this dacoity with the alleged conspiracy not established.

The Sibpur dacoity was on the 3rd of April 1908, and though Lolit refers to it, his evidence in this connection can command no confidence, and Mr. P. L. Roy wisely refrained from placing any reliance on it.

Norendro Nath Chatterji, it is true, was arrested on the 4th or 5th of April 1908, but no charge sheet was submitted and he was discharged. Apart from this, there is no evidence that any of the accused took part in the dacoity, or that it was the work of those engaged in the alleged conspiracy.

The Barah dacoity was on the 2nd of June 1908, and of the accused before the Court, Kartick Dutt was put on his trial for this offence, but was acquitted. There is no credible evidence to connect any other of the accused or the conspiracy with this dacoity. It is true that Lolit tells a tale in connection with the loot of this dacoity that implicates Pabitra Charan Dutt and Bimola Deb, but Counsel for the Crown informed the Court that he did not rely on this, and, in my opinion, he had very good reasons for taking this course.

The Bighati dacoity was on the 16th September 1908, and Kartick Dutt's participation in it is placed beyond question by his conviction. Apart from this there is no evidence of direct participation in the affair by any other of the accused. Lolit's attempt to connect certain of the accused with it by means of conversation he overheard, obviously fails. How far this dacoity can be treated as the work of the conspiracy under investigation will be considered when I come to deal with the case of Kartick Dutt.

The attempted dacoity at Protapchuck is not brought home by reliable evidence, either to any of the accused or to the conspiracy. Though there is reason to think that the Raita dacoity (November 29th 1908) was committed by what has been termed respectable men, there is nothing which suggests what

any of the accused took part in it, beyond the retracted confession of Susil Biswas, who names Manmatho, Bamapodo and Bhupen. But this obviously cannot take the place of legal proof.

The Morehal dacoity was on the 2nd December 1908, and, as I have already said, Monmotho Nath Rai Chowdhury has been convicted as one of the offenders. It is said by the prosecution that Dasarathi Chatterji, Shibu Hazra and Atul Pal were also of the party, and the approver Jatin no doubt names them. Not only, however, is his evidence wholly uncorroborated, but it is at least doubtful whether Jatin was at the occurrence. He tells a story of bursting open a safe with gunpowder which cannot have escaped the notice of others, and yet is mentioned by no one ; his name does not appear in Monmotho's confession ; and though put on his trial he was acquitted at the Sessions. In the circumstances it cannot be fairly said that this dacoity is brought home to any one except Monmotho Nath Rai Chowdhury, though it may be that some of the dacoits were *bhadralog*.

The Musapur dacoity was on the 27th of February 1909. There is, however, nothing to connect any of the accused with the occurrence. Lolit seeks to connect it with conspiracy, but his evidence is unreliable. As I have already pointed out, he places the dacoity in April, though it occurred in February.

The Netra dacoity was on the 23rd of April 1908, and it owes its importance in this case to the fact that it was in connection with this affair that the approver Lolit Mohun Chakravarty was arrested, and it is on his successive statements that the whole fabric of this case practically rests. He ultimately seeks to implicate no fewer than fifteen of the accused in this dacoity either as actors or instigators. The fact of the dacoity is beyond dispute, and if Lolit is to be believed it was preceded by two abortive attempts. These need not be discussed at any length, nor is it necessary to do more than point out that his evidence as to the second of them is open to considerable doubt, for, while he would place it within the month of April, he states that the attempt failed because the Musapur dacoity interfered,

but in fact it appears that the Musapur dacoity was in February.

The first information of the Netra dacoity was lodged by Ram Taran Mitra, the owner of the looted house, within a few hours after the occurrence, and what appears there leaves little doubt that the dacoits cannot have been ordinary criminals, and it is peculiarly significant that the dacoits were at that early stage reported to have said "the money and ornaments that we are taking are meant solely for driving the English root and branch from this country. We are in want of funds, and therefore we are obliged to collect money in this fashion. When the time comes we will return the money with interest." This points very clearly to the purpose and personnel of the party, and is in accord with the allegation that the dacoits were Hindus and the sons of *bhadralogs*. Though Lolit in his evidence deposes that the dacoits were 21 in all, yet, in the first information it is said there were only seven or eight young men.

It will be convenient here to recall Lolit's version of the whole affair. After detailing the instructions he received from Noni Gopal Sen Gupta, he states that he went by train to Deula, where he alighted at 5-40 or 6-40 P.M. with others, whom he conducted to a field. There five men of Joynagar and Mazilpur met them and about midnight, after the last train from Diamond Harbour had passed, the party proceeded to the scene of the dacoity, Ram Taran Mitter's house, led by Lolit. Arrived at the house, Kali Chakravarti and Madaru scaled the wall. Lolit concealed himself in a drain, two men mounted guard and the house was looted. Then Lolit led them back again past the field, and, after they had gone two or three miles, the party sat under a tree and took count of the spoil of which a list was made. With certain trifling exceptions the arms and loot were made over to the men of Joynagar and Mazilpur. The rest went in batches of 3, 4 or 5 up to Sangrampur Mat, the men with Lolit being, to use his own words, "Soilen Das, Bistopodo Chatterjee, Atul Mnkherjee and, I think, Upen De." This batch went to Magra Hat station and there they got into the third train from Diamond Harbour to Calcutta.

Such in broad outline is Lolit's story of the dacoity as presented to us in the course of his examination-in-chief. He then goes on to describe visits to Sarat Mitter and Noni Gopal, his expedition under Noni's instruction on the following day, which must have been Sunday, the 25th April, his arrival at Mazilpur, and his return in the early hours of Monday with the plunder, accompanied by Chuni Lal Nandi and Rajani Bhatta-charjee. Though there is reason to think that this dacoity was connected with some such conspiracy as is charged in this case, I will reserve for consideration when I come to deal with their individual cases whether the evidence establishes the guilt of Chuni Lal and Rojoni, but against the rest of the accused the imputation that they were in this dacoity fails.

The Maharajpur dacoity was on the 27th July 1909. The evidence discloses nothing that serves to connect the offence either with any of the accused or with the alleged conspiracy.

The Haludbari dacoity was on the 28th of October 1909, and the accused Soilen Das, Susil Biswas, Atul Mukerjee, Kiran Rai, Gonesh Das, Sailendra Chatterjee, and Upendra Kristo Deb have on a previous trial been found guilty of this offence. The accused Bidhu Bhusan Biswas and Monmotho Biswas, who were tried with them, were acquitted. One of the principal overt acts alleged in the complaint initiating these proceedings is, "the seduction of and attempting to seduce certain men of the 10th Jats from their allegiance." This, according to the prosecution, was a distinct and complete offence in itself, and it is much to be regretted that it has not been brought to trial as such. However this has not been done, and we have therefore been compelled to try in this case the charge of attempting to seduce the sepoys of the 10th Jats from their allegiance and duty, and of conspiring in such attempt, so that, as far as the present accused are concerned, the judgment of the Court on that charge will be conclusive. The men of the 10th Jats involved in this offence are, according to the prosecution Surjan Singh, Chunai Havildar, and possibly Ram Gopal ; but it is Surjan Singh who figures most prominently in this connection, and the accused

whom the prosecution would implicate in this affair are Noren Chatterji, Sarat Mitter, Bhutan Mukherji and Noni Gopal.

The specific acts alleged are (1) that Surjan Singh was initiated into the secret society at Bhutan's house at Sibpur, where he and Ram Gopal were taken by Noren Chatterjee, (2) that Surjan Singh was thrice given money, once by Noren Chatterji and twice by Lolit, and (3) that these men of the 10th Jats visited Sarat, and were in constant touch with Noren Chatterji. I may say at once that against Noni there is absolutely no evidence ; of the payments by Lolit there is not a word of corroboration, and in fact these payments are opposed to Surjan's testimony ; for Noren's payment to Surjan we have to depend on the unsupported evidence of Surjan, who was, on his own showing a party to this alleged criminal transaction. But there is a more serious difficulty in the prosecution's way. One of the witnesses on whom the prosecution principally rely for the story of the initiation is Ram Gopal, for his evidence at any rate, it is claimed, cannot be depreciated as that of an accomplice. Ram Gopal was a soldier in the 10th Jats, and his evidence is that he left the regiment in November or December 1908. The exact date must be a matter of record, within easy reach of the prosecution, and no attempt has been made to question the correctness of this date, and so presumably the prosecution accept it as correct. Now, Ram Gopal speaks to the visit with Surjan to Sibpur, and places it 5 or 6 months before he left the regiment, and though it would be wrong to tie him down strictly to this computation of time, it is reasonable to suppose that, according to him, this visit occurred some considerable time before November or December 1908. Here, again, the prosecution could have fixed the date, as the excursion is said to have been made while Surjan was in hospital with a dislocated knee. No steps, however, have been taken to show that Ram Gopal was in error, so that here too it is fair to assume that the prosecution accept as correct the time approximately fixed by Ram Gopal. For what it may be worth, I may point out that it was said to be drizzling at the time of this visit to Sibpur, and this would agree with Ram Gopal's esti-

mate of the time. At the same time the evidence of these Jat witnesses is that before and after the Sibpur incident, they used to go to Sarat's dispensary at 86-1, Diamond Harbour Road. This is clear from the evidence itself, and is confirmed by the fact that it was this house that Surjan Singh pointed out to the verifying Magistrate. The evidence, however, is clear that Sarat was not living in Diamond Harbour Road at the date of this alleged visit to Sibpur, whether it occurred 5 months or even less than 5 months before November-December 1908. This visit to Sarat's, it has to be borne in mind, is not an irrelevant incident ; it is an essential and integral part of the story of the initiation, and the discrepancy, to which I have drawn attention, throws serious discredit on the whole story of the journey to Sibpur, which is in itself improbable. In expressing these definite and positive conclusions in regard to the Jat soldiers, it is right to state that though they are the conclusions of the Court, they do not in all respects represent our unanimous opinion. But the divergence of view is not such as to qualify the unanimity of our opinion on the essential question whether the accused, alleged to be involved in this incident, are or are not proved to be guilty of the offence of conspiracy with which they are charged. On that we are all agreed.

Then it is claimed that the *Chatra Bhandar* affords strong evidence of the existence of the conspiracy, and is of value as incriminating several of the accused. It came into existence as far back as 1903 as a Students' Co-operative Stores Association, and it is conceded that in its origin, it was a legitimate trading concern. In August 1906 it was converted into a limited company, but whether it was before or after this that it was put to unlawful ends has not been formulated by the prosecution. The theory now advanced is that the conspirators saw in its prosperity a useful instrument for forwarding their ends, and they accordingly captured the Association. The uses to which, according to this theory, the Association was put were first to earn money for the conspiracy, secondly, to afford a secure meeting place for the conspirators, and thirdly, to be the Bankers of the cause. But ingenious and attractive as this may be as

a theory, it has no foundation in established fact ; not one of these three suggestions is proved But then it is said that a close connection existed between the *Chatra Bhandar* and the *Jugantar*, and that from this the true character of the *Chatra Bhandar* is to be learnt. For this, reliance is placed on the fact that the proof of the *Chatra Bhandar's* blue prospectus was printed at at the Sumati Printing Works. But it would seem that these printing works belonged to Nikhileshwar Roy Maulick, who was a Director of the *Chatra Bhandar*, so that the fact on which so much reliance is placed, is capable of an explanation which is not only innocent but probable. And, in this connection, it has to be borne in mind that Nikhileshwar has been conclusively acquitted of participation in the conspiracy set up by the prosecution. It is true that on the *Chatra Bhandar* prospectus the *Jugantar* was advertised, but of this an explanation has been suggested, and, in any case, it cannot be overlooked that the *Chatra Bhandar* had 10 Directors, and that of these, two have been acquitted of being concerned in the conspiracy while, of the remainder, it is only against Pabitra that any suggestion of complicity has been made. Moreover, at this time, it has to be remembered, the *Jugantar* had been in existence some considerable time, its popularity was great, and no objection had been taken to its tone and its teaching by the authorities. Precisely the same considerations apply to the alleged connection with the *Mukti Kon Pathe*. Then again, so far as the printing of *Chatra Bhandar* documents is concerned, it was in no sense limited to the Sadhana Press, but the accounts show that a large amount of printing work was done at other presses, even while the Sadhana Press was in existence.

Then it is urged that the *Chatra Bhandar* is condemned by the books it sold. True it is that *Mukti Kon Pathe*, *Bartaman Rana Niti* and *Jaatiya Samasya* were sold there, but they were not proscribed books ; they were sold elsewhere, and it is not suggested that they were only sold at establishments in league with the conspiracy. Nor were the *Chatra Bhandar's* sales of books restricted to these three publications ; on the contrary, it is clearly shown that a large number of different publications

was sold to which no exception could be taken. There has been some discussion before us as to whether the three offending publications, to which I have referred, belonged, to the *Chatra Bhandar*, or were merely sold by it in the ordinary course of business, and each side has referred us to the Association's books of account. But such of them as have been produced throw no conclusive light on the point, and as possession of all was taken by the police, the defence cannot be treated as responsible for the non-production of the rest, so all that can be said is that the prosecution have not proved that these publications belonged to the *Chatra Bhandar*. I do not overlook the expressions and sentiments contained in the blue prospectus to which our attention has been drawn, but giving to them all the force adverse to the Association to which they are fairly entitled I find it impossible to regard them as establishing the *Chatra Bhandar's* connection with the conspiracy into which we are enquiring in this case.

It is the case for the prosecution that the *Jugantar* was an integral part of the conspiracy. It was started in March 1906, and its origin and its purpose are matters of common knowledge. Its articles and its popularity have been brought to our notice, and the facts show that those who guided its policy managed to select writers possessed of a style so levelled to the popular taste that even street traffic was impeded in the rush of would-be purchasers. Inspector Purno Chander Lahiri has told us that people were amazed at the inaction of the Government, and the audacity of the paper and this I can well understand, for notwithstanding its pernicious teachings no step was taken to check it until July 1907. All this may be conceded and regretted, but our concern is to see how far the connection of the *Jugantar* with the conspiracy we are investigating, and the accused we are trying, has been made good. Taranath's connection with *Jugantar* is established, but he holds an isolated position among these accused, as does Kartick, who alone of the rest is said to have had relations with that paper. Apart from this the accused are not shown to have been connected with the *Jugantar* in any sense that would justify us in holding that it was a

limb of the conspiracy under trial. The mere discovery of copies of the paper at searches proves nothing, for admittedly, it had an unusually wide circulation. True it is that the *Jugantar* was a limb of the Muraripukur garden conspiracy, but as I will show, that was distinct from the one into which we are enquiring. And this brings me to the prosecution's suggestion that the conspiracy with which we are concerned in this case is a part or branch of that which had its head-quarters at Muraripukur garden. This was not the case for the prosecution as formulated in the complaint of the 4th March 1910, on which these present proceedings were initiated ; there is no mention there of that conspiracy, and not even a reference to any of the overt acts which were a part of that conspiracy. And yet this can hardly have been due to oversight, for that conspiracy and the outrages that belonged to it were a matter of public notoriety.

It was not until the 2nd of May 1910 that a reference was made to the Muraripukur conspiracy, or to the accused, Taranath and Kartick, who are said to have been intimately connected with it. Now it is well known that the Muraripukur conspiracy was the subject of long and careful police investigation, and of subsequent judicial enquiry and trial, in the course of which a very large number of witnesses and an immense volume of documentary evidence was used. No pains were spared to secure an exhaustive enquiry, and yet it is not suggested before us that anything came to light that would establish the connection now sought ; and it is remarkable that Counsel for the prosecution has been unable to suggest that, in any of the mass of documents seized at the Muraripukur garden, there is any trace of the connection now alleged. The suggestion made in Counsel's opening speech that this conspiracy was linked with the Muraripukur garden conspiracy, through an alleged connection between Kartick Dutt and Hem Das, has absolutely not a tittle of evidence in its support. And the proposal to connect this conspiracy with the Muraripukur, through Sirish Sarkar and Satis Sarkar, and the expedition from Patna to Nepal, is far too fanciful and remote for serious acceptance.

Much evidence has been adduced to show association in music, gymnastic exercises and *lathi*-play, and it is on this *lathi*-play that the prosecution have principally relied. But when Counsel was asked to formulate the part played by these *lathi* exercises in the scheme of the conspiracy, he was unable to advance any suggestion from which much assistance could be derived. It may be that these exercises would conduce to the acquisition of strength, agility, hardihood and discipline, all no doubt qualities useful in war, but it was not and could not be reasonably argued that the contemplated war was to be waged with *lathis*, or that these exercises standing alone could be treated as evidence of a conspiracy to wage war. To attach sinister significance to the mere association in play or pastimes of those who live in the same village or attend the same school, would, I think, be dangerous at any rate on the evidence that has been adduced before us. Evidently it did not occur to those who joined in these exercises that they were doing that which would bring them into their present predicament, for there was a complete absence of secrecy, and rather a courting of publicity in the performance of these exercises. The defence are not without a theory as to the significance of this *lathi*-play, but in the view I take, it is unnecessary to discuss it.

There is but one further point to which I would desire to allude before I proceed to deal with the individual cases. It is the charge of conspiracy that has been argued before us, and no other, and that charge is single and complete. At the same time there are many accused before us and they are drawn from different parts of the country. These accused have been described by the prosecution, and conveniently described as falling into groups. But it is not open to us to find more conspiracies than one, for there is the highest authority that it is a legal impossibility when several persons are charged with the same conspiracy that some should be found guilty of one conspiracy and some of another. This proposition was accepted by counsel for the prosecution as one by which the court must be governed. It is thus only open to us to find one conspiracy, and for the prosecution to succeed against any one of the accused, they

must establish by proper and sufficient proof that he is a member of that conspiracy.

Any accused not shown to be a member of that conspiracy is entitled to demand an acquittal at our hands, however bad his record may be and however much he may be suspected of this or that offence. Any other view would be intolerable.

The case against Nani Gopal Sen Gupta rests principally on the testimony of the two approvers, Lolit and Jotin, and if they are to be credited, then this accused is one of the leaders of this conspiracy. But their evidence against him is of the most inconclusive character and relates for the most part to conversations with him, and instructions received from him, and coming as it does from these sources, it has to be scrutinised with care and accepted with caution. No witness corroborates either Lolit and Jotin as to a single detail to which they severally depose, in relation to Nani Gopal, though some have been called and have given evidence as to his taking part in gymnastics, wrestling and *lathi*-play and as to his association with Bhuban and Madaru a circumstance from which it is obvious that no adverse inference can reasonably be drawn seeing that they are near neighbours and known to each other.

The straits to which the prosecution have been reduced in the endeavour to adduce incriminating evidence against Nani, may be illustrated by the testimony as to the finding of cartridges in a tank in the neighbourhood of Nani's house, and in the immediate proximity of a public road.

One Sarna Bewa, a woman who describes herself as unemployed and doing no work, tells a story of how she found in the tank where the water was about one foot deep things which apparently were cartridges. She showed them, she says, to a goldsmith named Jamini, who told her they were nothing and that she had better throw them away. She spoke about this to no one but Jamini, and following his advice she threw them into a big drain. Jamini too is called and he says Sarna brought to him these things, but he, as puzzled as she, could not make out what they were, and so he advised her, with some inconsequence, to throw them away. It does not appear

how Jamini's knowledge of this occurrence came to light, but somehow it did, if we are to believe the evidence and, what is more remarkable, Soilen professes to have known of it all according to his third and final confession, of which he delivered himself on the 10th of March 1910. It is worth quoting what he says about this : After relating that one Kishori had 5 revolvers and 200 cartridges kept with him by Noni and that Kishori in fear of a search had thrown them into the tank, he proceeds; "Kishori was sent for and when asked for the revolvers he said he had thrown them into the tank. The revolvers and cartridges were taken out, but 5 or 6 cartridges remained in the tank. Some fisher women while fishing got those cartridges, and took them to a goldsmith's shop. The goldsmith tested them and said they were not gold. He did not know they were revolver cartridges, so he returned them to the fisherwomen Noni Babu heard of this and cleverly managed to get the cartridges back from the fisherwomen." And in this way Soilen turns to use against Noni the story of Sarna and Jamini? According to Soilen the discovery of cartridges must have followed the assault, and this is in harmony with Jamini's version of the affair. Jamini places the discovery in *Aghran*, and further fixes it by saying it was immediately after the *Puja* before last, that is the *Puja* of 1909 which ended on the 24th of October in that year. But in *Aghran* Soilen was in custody for the Haludbari dacoity, and from that day on he has remained in custody. How then was he able to introduce into his confession events which happened (if at all) while he was in custody? When this difficulty was brought to the notice of Counsel for the prosecution he offered two explanations first, that Soilen and Jamini were speaking to different incidents, and secondly, that the mention of *Aghran* was a mistake. The first of these he felt compelled to abandon, and I need not deal with it, so that it is only the second that calls for notice. Now, while it was suggested that the mention of *Aghran* must be a mistake, it was conceded that the reference to the end of the *Pujas* must be accepted, and this it was claimed made Soilen's story possible. The first day after the *Pujas* was the 25th of October. On the early mor-

ning of the 28th of October, Soilen was arrested at Mirpur, and must have left Calcutta not later than the 27th. So it is on the 25th, 26th or a part of the 27th that Soilen, according to the prosecution, got this information which he imparts in his confession. And so according to the prosecution, within this very limited time, Sarna went to Jamini, and taking his advice, threw the cartridges into the big drain, and Noni by some means, which have not been explained, learnt of the affair, and "cleverly managed to get the cartridges back from the fisherwomen," and information of the occurrence reached Soilen. The imputed cleverness of Noni becomes all the more remarkable in view of the fact that neither Sarna nor Jamini knew they were cartridges, and that Sarna spoke to no one of what she had done, and that she threw them into the big drain. The prosecution theory is not without its difficulties. Soilen however furnishes a much simpler explanation : it is in effect that his confession was false.

Now it has to be seen how far the case is advanced by documentary evidence against Noni Gopal. Much reliance is placed on three letters, Exhibits 26 (a), 26 (b) and 332. They were all three written by Noni while he was in jail, the first two on the 28th of March 1910, and the last on the 17th July 1910. The significance of the two letters of the 28th of March, according to the prosecution, is that they show intimate acquaintance with those to whom they were addressed, and that Noni was even in jail regarded by them as their leader. Noni's previous acquaintance with Jogesh Mitter, to whom one of the letters was addressed, has never been disputed : they were near neighbours. His previous acquaintance with Sarat is denied, and it is urged there is nothing in the letter to him that negatives or even raises a doubt as to this.

I agree with this. It has to be borne in mind that Nani and Sarat were arrested as far back as the 20th of January 1910, and that these letters were written on the following 28th of March. During this time these two accused were kept in the same jail, and it is established that the accused while in jail met and in particular they bathed and had their meals together. Indeed the

prosecution repudiates the idea that the accused were subjected to solitary confinements. Then looking at the letters, it is at once obvious that they refer to events after and not before the arrest. Whether the ground of complaint they suggest of police oppression in jail is true or not, is not relevant to this particular issue, and if it were, we have no materials on which to pronounce a definite opinion one way or the other. The suggestion that they point to the esteem in which Noni was held by his co-accused, possesses no importance, and the letters obviously cannot be read as proof of Noni's guilt of the conspiracy with which he is charged. The third letter, Exhibit 332, is one written from jail by Noni to his mother on or about the 17th of July, and to appreciate the significance of this letter, and its true meaning, it is necessary to realise the predicament in which Noni then found himself. He had been arrested on the 20th January, just six months before, and during the whole of that period he had been in custody. The procedure of the Special Act had been put in force against him, so that he was unrepresented by Counsel or any legal adviser during the magisterial inquiry, and it has been asserted before us, and not contradicted, that, during the period, neither legal advisers nor friends had any access to him. He must have known the enquiry was drawing to an end, and that, in its course, an immense number of witnesses had been examined, they numbered in all considerably over 400, and he probably anticipated, as the fact was, that the Magistrate was about to commit the case for trial. He was conscious that he had against him all the resources of the prosecution and the position was not one calculated to inspire confidence.

What is the tone of his letter? "I am lost unless I can be defended, and defence is impossible owing to the enormous cost it will involve, a cost that is wholly beyond our resources, unless possibly you can secure divine intervention on my behalf." That I take it to be the real meaning of what he writes to his mother, and I am not prepared to say that he was very wide of the mark. In a case so complicated it would have been next to impossible for any tribunal to have mastered unaided

the mass of documents and accounts, necessary for an adequate presentment of the defence, or to have possessed the knowledge requisite for the cross-examination of the witnesses and particularly of the approvers.

I cannot refrain here from digressing for one moment to express to Counsel who have undertaken the defence of the accused my appreciation of their assistance. Their mastery of the details of this case and the aid that they were thus enabled to give the Court calls for the highest commendation, and I willingly give it, and in particular I would wish to acknowledge the admirable defence of Mr. J. N. Roy, who never, in length of cross examination or length of speech, exceeded what was right and useful.

But to return to this letter of the 21st of July, it must take its place, if anything, as a confession of guilt, but that effect cannot be attributed to its terms. In my opinion it falls absolutely and wholly short of that, and to treat it as a confession by Noni that he did enter into the conspiracy to wage war against the King is beyond my ability.

The case as to Noni does not rest there. While the prosecution will have it that he was the leader of the conspiracy, yet a search of his house has disclosed absolutely nothing incriminating. This is a circumstance of no small significance, but the prosecution suggest an escape from it is to be found in Soilen's confession where he naively remarks, "Noni Babu never keeps any incriminating things in his house," a piece of information that he conveniently supplies after Noni's house had been searched, with the fruitless result that I have indicated. It is difficult to preserve patience when one realizes all that this statement implies, made as it was over four months after Soilen had been in custody. It is on a par with his statement that he was re-initiated by Noni. Not only was nothing incriminating found on the search of Noni's premises but no other search, not a single document not even the *Chatra Bhandar* account, has brought to light or disclosed anything that incriminates Noni. In my opinion the case against Noni Copal has failed.

Bhutan Mukerji, also known as Kristodhan, lived at Shibpur with his brother, the accused Bhuban, whose trial has been adjourned on the ground of his insanity. Both Lolit and Jotin speak to his membership of the conspiracy, imputing to him active participation in its work, and implicating him in specific incidents but their evidence is without any corroboration. Lolit's evidence is noteworthy for his substitution before us of Bhutan's name in place of that of Bhuban, who is no longer on his trial. But the evidence effecting Bhutan, which calls for serious consideration, is that which would make him an active worker in the attempt to seduce soldiers of the 10th Jats

This fails under two heads : first there is the testimony of those police officers who watched the lines of the 10th Jats and profess to have seen Bengali Babus speaking to the soldiers. They are Head Constables Benoy Krishna Banerjee and Abbas Sobhan, but they neither of them are able to state with any degree of certainty that it was actually Bhutan that they saw. And, apart from that, their evidence, so far as it is aimed against Bhutan, is by no means convincing. Thus, while Binoy Kristo before the Magistrate declared that he tried to get the Bengalis' names but could not succeed, he at first swore to the exact opposite here, and persisted in it until he was confronted with his former statement, which he was ultimately constrained to admit was correct. And so Abbas Sobhan has asserted before us that he saw two Bengali Youths come and speak to the Sepoys, and professed to recognize Bhutan as one of them, but before the Magistrate, while he said he saw Bengalis talking to the Sepoys, still, when shown Bhutan and Bhuban, he admitted he could not recollect if he actually saw these men talking to the Sepoys. And then there is this further fact as to both these witnesses. Each has declared that he reported what he observed to his Superintendent. Not only however has the prosecution failed to produce these reports, but though the Superintendent appeared as a witness before us not a question was put to him by Counsel for the prosecution on this matter, a failure and a reticence that has justly attracted comment. I do not suggest that Bengalis may not have been seen talking to

the Jat soldiers, but the evidence fails to show that Bhutan was one of those Bengalis.

The other branch of the Jat case is that which would make Bhutan an active participant in the initiation of Surjan Singh at Sibpur. I have already shown the falsity of the story of their going to Sibpur and I need not again travel over the same ground. Some reliance was placed on the fact of Bhutan's house having been pointed out in the course of verification proceedings, and this has been much discussed before us. I have given the matter my most careful consideration, and I am not convinced that the alleged identification is of the smallest value. Moreover, the rival versions of Surjan and Ram Gopal are divergent on points where they could hardly have failed to be in agreement had these witnesses been narrating their actual experiences.

Apart then from the contention that Surjan and Ram Gopal on their own showing would be accomplices, my estimate of their evidence is that it is not trustworthy, their stories are discrepant and their narrative is on a vital point disproved. The only remaining evidence against Bhutan is that of association, but it comes to nothing. On the other hand the search of his premises has revealed nothing incriminating, nor is there any document to which the prosecution can point as even suggestive of his membership of the conspiracy with which he is charged. Therefore the case against Bhutan has failed.

The oral evidence against Bishtupada Chatterji proceeds wholly from faint sources, for though Sital Chunder Ganguli names him, he was unable to identify him and imputes nothing incriminating to him. The search of his house disclosed nothing that would justify the conclusion that his guilt was established, and therefore the case against him fails.

Jogesh Mittra alias Madaru, according to Lolit, was an active conspirator, and he ascribes to him a number of acts, including in particular participation in the Netra dacoity. But in no respect is there any corroboration of this evidence or of that given by Jotin, who also would implicate him in the conspiracy or of Soilen's third confession in which he is named. Beyond

this the oral evidence is limited to his taking part in wrestling and *lathi* play, and to his associating with others of the accused who happened to be his neighbours. Jogesh resided with his uncle whose house was accordingly searched, and this search of his residence resulted in the discovery of some *rakhi* songs and a book called "The Mysteries of Nihilism," apparently belonging to one S. N. Bose. How any of these documents can be brought home to Jogesh it is difficult to see, as they were not found in his room. In my opinion, the case against Jogesh fails.

Noren Chatterji *alias* Bholanath is the last of the Sibpur group. Lolit mentions him in connection with many incidents but without corroboration, and indeed, as to the most important of these incidents, the payment to Surjan Singh of money obtained by Lolit from Noren, his evidence is contradicted. Jotin mentions him in connection with the Protapchuck attempt, but his testimony is without any support. It is the evidence against this accused from other sources that calls for more serious consideration, and, in particular, that which relates to the soldiers of the 10th Jats.

Briefly what is charged is that Noren got into touch with these soldiers that he arranged for and assisted in the initiation of Surjan Singh into the conspiracy at Sibpur, and that he paid Surjan Singh money in return for his assent to join the conspiracy. I have already dealt with the story of Surjan's initiation and have shown its falsity, and I need not further discuss it, as I have already expressed the opinion that, not only is it impossible for the initiation to have occurred in the manner described in the evidence, but that, in other respects, the testimony in its support is so untrustworthy as to be (in my opinion) incapable of acceptance.

The payment of money by Noren to Surjan rests in part on the evidence of Lolit and in part on that of Surjan. Lalit says he handed to Surjan on two occasions money, received for that purpose from Noren Chatterji, but his evidence on this point is not merely uncorroborated ; it is actually opposed to that of Surjan. Surjan makes a statement that he received Rs. 50 direct

from Noren Chatterji, but not only is this without corroboration, but it rests on, and is indissolubly connected with, the story of the initiation which in my opinion must be rejected for reasons I have already indicated.

Evidence has been adduced to show that Noren Chatterji lived with Dr. Sarat, but this merely shows association between the two, and that is not disputed ; on the contrary the case for the defence is that the two were connections, for Noren married according to the Arya Samaj rites, a relative of Sarat's, and it was this that led to Noren's living with Sarat. Then the prosecution say that Noren went to the Punjab and lived at Lahore. This is admitted, but it is denied that Lolit could have had, as he pretends, any personal knowledge of this. Lolit's evidence is that Noren took this journey while he, Lolit, was still at Dr. Sarat's but it is abundantly proved that Noren went to the Punjab in July 1909. At the time Lolit is proved to have been at Nattore. There is no evidence to show that Noren, while at Lahore, did anything that could be attributed to his alleged membership of the conspiracy. There is evidence of Noren's association with the Sibpur party, but that was at a time when he lived there, and there is no independent evidence of his having been seen in Sibpur after he went to live in Kidderpur, that is, to say after 1907. Then it is sought to use against Noren the fact that a proclamation was issued against him, for this, it is urged, shows that he was a fugitive from justice. What endeavours were made to arrest him does not appear beyond the fact that Manmotho Nath Ghose, a Sub-inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department, who says he knew Naren by name, and not by sight, searched for him in his house in Sibpur and in Calcutta in different parts of the town. The search in Sibpur in 1910 was not likely to be profitable, seeing that there is no evidence that he was ever there subsequently to 1907. The details of the other searches have not been placed before us ; but this we know that when he was seen by R. M. Ghosal, the officer who arrested him, he made no attempt at concealment or escape, and apparently he had a place of residence in Calcutta, No. 19, Ananda Khan's Lane, which is never shown

to have been searched. Have we then before us the materials that would entitle us to attribute to Noren a flight from justice that could fairly be regarded as indirect confessional evidence, pointing to his guilt of the conspiracy charged ? I think not. To begin with, no circumstances are proved that would entitle us to hold that he wittingly endeavoured to evade arrest. And even if this were otherwise, I cannot forget the comment of a distinguished Judge on indications of this type, that if the evidence without them is sufficient, this species of evidence is unnecessary, and that if not, then the inferences from them seem not of sufficient weight to give any conclusive effect to the others proofs.

The case against Noren Chatterji has failed.

I have now dealt with all the members of the Sibpur group, and I have come to the conclusion, for the reasons I have stated, that the case made against them has not been proved. And this being so it is unnecessary for me to discuss whether on other grounds too the charge of conspiracy, so far as it relates to them, has not failed.

I now pass to the Kurchi group which is said to consist of Shibu Hazra, Atul Pal, Dasarathi Chatterji, and Monmotho Rai Chowdhuri. The overt acts particularly attributed to them are the Morehal dacoity and the attempt at Protapchuck.

I will first take up the case of Atul Pal. The evidence against him is of the most meagre description. He is named by Jotin Hazra as a member of the conspiracy, and as having been present at the Morehal dacoity, but of this there is no corroboration. On the contrary there is an indication that he was not present, for Monmotho Rai Chowdhuri, who was caught red handed and confessed at once, never mentioned or referred to him in his confession. The evidence of association shows nothing more than companionship between him and his co-villagers. Therefore the case against Atul Pal fails.

Monmotho Nath Rai Chowdhuri has been tried and convicted of participation in the Morehal dacoity. Of the justice of that conviction there can be no question ; he was most happily caught on the spot and his confession is a complete admission of

his guilt. For this he has already been sentenced to the substantial punishment of six years' rigorous imprisonment which he fully merited. But does this conviction establish his membership of the conspiracy charged in this case ? This depends on whether the Morehal dacoity can be linked up with the conspiracy. The only direct evidence on this point is that of Jotin Hazra, and, apart from the general untrustworthiness of this approver, it is doubtful whether he was present at this dacoity. It is true that after his arrest he confessed to this crime, but he afterwards withdrew this confession on the ground that it was wrongly extorted and in the end he was acquitted. In addition to this, Monmotho Nath Rai Chowdhuri does not mention him in his confession, though the evidence is that Jotin knew him two months before the dacoity. In the circumstances it is impossible to accept Jotin's evidence on this matter with any degree of confidence. Monmotho's confession certainly does not point to a conspiracy to wage war, or to any purpose beyond a desire on the part of the dacoits to enrich themselves. And beyond this we have nothing but remarks attributed to Shibu by Fakir Pal, a witness who did not impress me favourably.

The connection of the Morehal dacoity with the alleged conspiracy is not established, and therefore Monmotho is not proved to be a member of the present conspiracy.

Dasarathi Chatterji is stated by the approver Jotin Hazra to have been a member of the secret society, and the prosecution have adduced evidence of his association with his co-villagers, members of the Kurchi group. The overt act in which he is alleged to have taken part is the Morehal dacoity. What precisely happened to Dasarathi in connection with the Morehal dacoity is not clear. Mr. Duval, the Committing Magistrate, says he was put on his trial and acquitted. If so, then there is an end of the case so far as he is concerned. No order of acquittal, however, has been placed before us, and if he was not acquitted, then he was either discharged or not put on his trial, for he certainly was not convicted. The position then is that we are now asked after this long lapse of time, and notwithstanding the discharge (if there was a discharge) to hold him

guilty of the offence on the strength of Jotin Hazra's evidence and retracted confession. In my opinion it must be held that Dasarathi Chattaji's guilt of the conspiracy to wage war against the King is not proved.

Shibu Hazra is the last of the Kurchi group with whom I have to deal with. According to the case for the prosecution he is the local leader of this group, and as such a prominent member of the conspiracy. His position and attainments however hardly fit him for this position. Before us Lolit pointed out Shibu as a man he had seen once or twice at Noni Gopal's house, though he says he does not know in what connection he went there. Before Mr. Duval however when Shibu and another accused were shown him, he said, "I do not identify these two men shown me." It is true that after his deposition was completed, Lolit professes that he saw Shibu at Noni's house, but this addition to his deposition is most suspicious, and, in the absence of any explanation by the prosecution, I am unable to place any reliance on it.

The other evidence against Shibu is alleged participation in the Morehal dacoity. I have however pointed out that this dacoity is not shown to have been the work of the conspiracy with which we are concerned. Further than that, Shibu was arrested at the time for complicity in that dacoity, but was discharged, and the propriety of that discharge was not called in question. There undoubtedly stands against Shibu a conviction under the Arms Act, and though the correctness of that decision was questioned, I think it must be accepted as conclusive. The punishment imposed was merely a fine of Rs. 25 and in default one month's rigorous imprisonment. This might at first blush appear an inadequate punishment, but a view of the weapon showed it was well fitted to the requirements of the case. It certainly was not a weapon with which one would willingly wage war against any one, much less against the King's forces, and the mere possession of it is very far from furnishing the proof of which we are in quest. It is unnecessary to discuss the evidence of Nitai Chunder Dwari, for it merely goes to prove the possession by Shibu of arms, and that I hold to be other-

wise established. The result then is that the case against Shibu fails.

The accused belonging to the Kidderpore group are Sarat Mitter and Suresh Mitter —Charu Charan Ghose was also treated as belonging to this group throughout the trial.

Sarat Mitter or Dr. Sarat, as he has been called, is a man of 46, with a family who, prior to his arrest, had carried on a dispensary and also a *mudi's* shop. Apart from the general evidence given by Lolit, the case against Sarat is that he supplied the poisoned pills of which we hear in connection with the dacoits, and that he was concerned with the attempt on the loyalty of the 10th Jats. The suggestion as to the poisoned pills is without anything to support it and must be rejected. His connection with the alleged attempt on the 10th Jats has not been established. That he was in any way involved in Surjan's initiation rests on the theory that he then lived at 86-1, Diamond Harbour Road, but this is clearly opposed to the fact, as I have already explained in some detail when discussing the story as to the 10th Jats. Moreover, apart from this, I think the attempt to prove Sarat guilty of attempting to seduce the Sepoys of the 10th Jats has failed.

What else is there against him after these allegations have failed? It never has been disputed that Lolit lived with him from the beginning of 1909 till April 1909, and it is said, and I think it is proved, that, while Lolit so lived with Sarat, he was in his employ at a small remuneration. For the defence, it is pointed out that there is nothing that tells against Sarat in this, for it would be quite natural, and in accordance with ordinary custom, that Lolit as a man with Muzilpur associations should go for employment to Sarat who had intimate connection with that village. Noren Chatterjee's connection too with Sarat admits of reasonable and innocent explanation, for he was married to his relative, and was employed in the immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, Noren was not a guest of Sarat's; he paid for his ordinary expenses. The search of Sarat's premises revealed nothing incriminating. The case against Sarat Mitter fails.

The case against Suresh Mitter also fails. Lolit's evidence implicating him is unsupported, for I cannot regard Baru Kurmi's testimony as showing that Suresh ever went with Lolit to Borya in connection with the robbery of an idol. Baru Kurmi's story is not convincing, but, even if it be accepted as true, it would go to show nothing against Suresh, seeing that he lived and carried on business at Rajpore, a village on the way to Netra, and used from time to time to stay with his brother Sarat ; and so naturally became acquainted with Lolit. Nothing incriminating is said to have been found in his house. The case against him fails.

Charu Chandra Ghose's physical infirmity was such that we were constrained to dispense with his attendance during the trial, and we have to-day been told that he has succumbed to the serious illness from which he was suffering. In the circumstances, it has become unnecessary to discuss the evidence adduced against him, but I would wish to say that a very careful consideration of that evidence has led me to the clear conclusion that he was innocent of the charge brought against him.

The Changripota party consists of Bhuson Mitter *alias* Guley and Noren Bhattacharjee.

Lolit mentions Bhuson in connection with four events, but as to none of them has he been corroborated ; in fact while Lolit would place him among the Netra dacoits, Soilen Das does not name him. Bhuson seems to have been suspected in connection with the Changripota dacoity, but he has never been placed on his trial for this offence, though it was committed more than three years ago. I have already indicated the difficulty in the way of our retrying that case after this long lapse of time, and in the absence of evidence which influenced the Court in discharging the accused then before it. The other evidence against him is that of Haran Chandra Chal who deposes that a party of young men, of whom the accused Bhuson and Noren Bhattacharjee were two, stamped the *bilati* cloth in Haran's Shop. The charge against him is not made put.

Noren Bhattacharjee is the other member of the Changripota group. He too was suspected of being concerned in the Changri-

pota dacoity but was discharged. He was party also to the cloth-stamping incident, and however reprehensible it may have been, it cannot be seriously regarded as proof of the conspiracy, charged in this case, and, indeed, it has not been so treated before us. Lolit, it is true, now speaks of Noren Bhattacharjee as a member of the conspiracy, but he so implicates him in general terms. Before us he has named him as one of those implicated in the Netra dacoity, and he says that it was at the Netra dacoity he first saw Noren Bhattacharjee, and came to know he was a member of the Society. Lolit however, made no mention of Noren in his confession, as a party to the Netra dacoity. He first introduces his name in this connection before the verifying Magistrate on the 13th of December. He, however, failed to identify him when he was taken to the Alipore Central Jail for that purpose, by Mr. Sati Prasad Ganguly, and he similarly failed before Mr. Duval on the 9th of April 1910. His evidence before the Committing Magistrate on the 11th of April, when Noren was shown to him was,—“Now too I am uncertain if this man was at the dacoity. A Norendra Nath Bhattacharjee of Changripota was, I heard, there.” And so we find that Lolit’s statement that Noren was at Netra comes to nothing, and as it is on Noren’s alleged presence there that he professes to base his knowledge of his being a member of the conspiracy, this imputation too falls to the ground I need only add that there is absolutely no corroboration of Lolit’s evidence against Noren. Noren Bhattacharjee’s visit to Benares is not treated by the prosecution as evidence against him : apparently it merely had to do with a possible treaty for marriage. On the search of Noren’s house nothing incriminating was found, but on the occasion of his arrest in connection with the Changripota dacoity, a copy of the *Bartaman Rananiti* was a very recent publication at that time, and was apparently, in great demand, so that mere possession of this book would obviously in no way establish membership of the conspiracy with which we are concerned. Nor would this membership be established by possession of the unpublished manuscript which is not shown or even suggested to be in Noren’s handwriting. The result

then is that in my opinion the case against Noren Bhattacharjee fails.

The Mazilpur group comes next, and it comprises four accused—Rajoni Bhattacharjee, Indu Kiron Bhattacharjee, Tincowri Das and Chuni Lal Nundi.

Against Indu Kiron there is no evidence worthy of consideration. Lolit declares that he was a conspirator, that he started on one of the abandoned excursions to Netra, and that he had to do with the Netra loot at Mazilpur. But there is not a syllable to be found in corroboration of any of these statements. It is said that he was a member of the Mazilpur Young Men's Association, but it cannot be pretended that this was a limb of the conspiracy, while the fact that he bought such innocent materials as bed sheeting, a towel and another article of a cognate character from the *Chatra Bhandar* on the 24th of January 1910, at a total cost of Rs. 2-7, can hardly be treated as evidence of guilt, though Counsel for the prosecution seriously brought these purchases to our notice as part of this case against Indu Kiron.

The case against Tincowri Das is also weak. Lolit would associate Tincowri with the preparations for the Netra dacoity and with the dacoity itself. He declares that while many of the party started by train from Baliaghata, the five men from Joynagar and Mazilpur (of whom Tincowri was one) came walking all the way, and that, after the dacoity was over and a list of the loot made, the stolen property and arms, except a few revolvers, were made over to the Joynagar men, and the Joynagar and Mazilpur men walked in the direction of Joynagar. He then goes on to describe how the rest of them made for the railway, and states that they returned by train, some from Mogra Hat Station and some from Sangrampore. He reached Sarat's house he says at 11 A.M. and this would be on the 24th of April. But Kusum Kumar Roy, prosecution witness No. 38 deposes that he went to Sarat's house at 10 or 11 A.M. on that morning, and then found Tincowri there upstairs, and suffering from high fever. This not only agrees with what Amulya Kumar Ray prosecution witness No.34, was told

on the 23rd, *i.e.*, that Tincowri had left the refreshment stall at the Zoological Gardens, where he was employed by Kusum, with fever, but it also shows that Tincowri could not have taken the part in the Netra dacoity ascribed to him by Lolit, or even have been there.

Counsel for the prosecution has seriously asked us to treat an act of kindness performed by Tincowri as tending to prove his guilt, for he has argued that the assistance rendered by Tincowri in connection with the cremation of a deceased Brahmo's body is indicative of his being a member of this conspiracy. It would have been a misfortune if this argument had possessed the force claimed for it, for I can imagine nothing more deplorable than that young men should be driven into churlishness through the fear that their kindly deeds may rise up in judgment against them. The evidence of association led against Tincowri goes for nothing ; as long as there is village life young men must have their neighbours as their companions in their sports and games. The documentary evidence connected with Tincowri furnishes no proof of his guilt, and in my opinion the case against him completely failed.

Rojoni Bhattacharjee according to Lolit took part in the Netra dacoity and helped to bring back the loot from Mazilpur. It is argued for the prosecution that there is confirmation of his presence at the dacoity in the discovery of the pieces of paper, Exhibit 15, coupled with the evidence of Fani Bhattacharjee and Fani Mukherjee, and of the story of the loot in the testimony of Jotindra Dutt and of Hem Chandra Mondal. The discovery of Exhibit 15 reflects credit on Mr. Warden's care and resource, and tends to induce a suspicion that Rojoni may have been present at the dacoity. By itself, however, it could not possibly form the basis of a judicial decision against Rojoni, so we have to see whether such a substratum of evidence has been laid as creates a substantial and independent *prima facie* case that Rojoni was present. We have nothing but Lolit's testimony and, apart from his general untrustworthiness, it has been very strongly contended before us that Lolit's version of the dacoity is such that he cannot have been present, or cannot have told

the truth. It is difficult to reconcile some of his statements with his actual presence at the dacoity. Thus he declared in his confession : "All of us had rubber masks on, and they covered our heads, faces, half of our arms and the body down to the waist. None with such a mask on can be identified. It also changes the tone of the voice. They were taken off in the field where the list was made and Bhutan took them away with him, I have heard that they were burnt off." This is a definite and detailed statement of a remarkable fact, and if Lolit really was at the dacoity, he can hardly have been mistaken as to these masks. And yet there is not a word about them in the first information or in the evidence of the witnesses called in this case. It point of fact the first information is opposed to this story, for we get a description there of one dacoity as having a *pagri* of white cloth tied on his head, as being of black complexion, and aged 18 or 19, of another as having his head, beard and moustaches shaved and being of black complexion, of another of having his chin tied round, and of the remaining three or four as having *pagris* on their heads and their chins tied round. Moreover Ram Taran in his first information said he would be able to recognize one of the dacoits. The evidence, too, negatives the wearing of these masks. I feel no doubt that the story told in the first information and the evidence is the true one, and if that be so how is it possible that Lalit can have been present, or at any rate can have told a true story as to the dacoity and those present at it ? Then again he has throughout declared there were 21 dacoits, but while in his confession he mentions a man from Ashu Babu's *akra*, in his statement to the verifying Magistrate, Norendra Nath Bhattacharjee takes this man's place. Then again he identifies two outsiders, Nirad Krishna Chakrabarty and Noni Gopal Bhattacharjee, as having taken part in the Netra dacoity, but it is admitted they had nothing whatever to do with it. It would be easy to cite other instances which go to show how unreliable Lolit is in his statements as to the Netra dacoity, but it is unnecessary ; those I have given suffice to show that the doubt cast by the defence on his presence is not without foundation, and it certainly would be most unsafe to rely

on his evidence as giving to the discovery of Exhibit 15 the requisite support.

Then there is the story of the carriage of the loot from Mazilpur. This is not the only occasion on which Lolit professes to have been sent for loot, and notably he claims to have been sent for the Barah loot, a story to which I have already referred as unworthy of acceptance. And so it is not unreasonable to look for confirmation of his mission in connection with the Netra loot. The pleader, a member of the family of Mazilpur Dutts, with whom he claims to have walked from Magra Hat station to Mazilpur, has not been called as a witness, but Jotindra Dutt and Hem Chandra Mondal have been called to corroborate Lolit's story of his journey with the loot from Mazilpur to Baruipore, for this is the route Lolit says he, Rojoni and Chuni took when carrying the loot back to Calcutta. Why they should have gone to Baruipore Station, which is 16 miles from Mazilpur, instead of Magra Hat Station, which is considerably nearer, and the station from which Lolit went to Mazilpur does not appear. But be that as it may, can it be said that Jotin corroborates Lolit? I think not. He does not fix with precision the date to which he deposes and this I feel is matter that might have been placed beyond dispute. But more than this, his evidence throws the gravest doubt on the story that the party had the loot with them. He could not have failed to observe the receptacles in which according to Lolit the loot was, for he describes them as "a very big earthen vessel and a very big trunk." Moreover, Jotin never saw Lolit. Jotin's failure to see either the "very big earthen vessel and the very big trunk" or Lolit, cannot be attributed to darkness, for it was daylight when he says he saw Rojoni and Chuni.

Hem Chandra Mandal's evidence is not very helpful. He is a *ticca ghari* driver who professes to remember having driven three men with a tin box and a *handi* to Baruipore from Barasat, and to be able to recognise Lalit as one of the party. But his story is hopelessly at variance with that told by Lolit and Jotindra, for he declares that it was in the night that he was roused by his master to drive these three fares to Baruipore

and that he reached the station before sunrise. He was not in the service of the man who owned the *ghari* when he gave evidence before us. It does not appear when he left that service, or how it became known that he could give this evidence. He was not a witness whose evidence would command confidence, particularly when he professed before us an ability to speak with particularity as to remote dates, which he apparently was not in a position to do before the Magistrate. Why his master, who is alive and who is said to have made the arrangement for the hire of the *ghari*, was not called, does not appear. The result is that the story cannot be taken to be proved. In addition to this there is a difficulty in the way of holding that Rojoni conspired with any of those included in the charge. Some literature was found on the search of the grandfather's house where Rojoni was living, but there were several other residents of this house, and the prosecution have failed to establish facts that would justify our holding that this literature was in Rojoni's possession, and so it is unnecessary to deal with it. This then is the case against Rojoni, and in my opinion, it fails to establish his guilt of the charge of conspiracy.

The only remaining accused of this group is Chuni Lal Nundi. Apart from minor incidents, which stand uncorroborated, Lolit would merely connect him with the Netra dacoity and residence at Benares. He is said to have been present at the Netra dacoity, but of this there is no corroboration. He is also said to have been a party to the carriage of the Netra loot from Mazilpur, and this story I have discussed at length in dealing with Rojoni's case.

Chuni Lal's alleged residence at Benares has given rise to much discussion. The case made by the prosecution is that Chuni and Pabitra went from Calcutta to Banares in June 1908, that they started the day before the *Rathjatra*, i.e., on the 30th of June, or the 16th of *Assar*, and that they broke their journey at Gaya, and resumed their journey the following day. Though the defence maintain that, even if the journey was taken, there was nothing incriminating in it, still they deny that either Chuni or Pabitra went to Benares at that time, and they contend that

the story of the prosecution is demonstrably false. Both Chuni and Pabitro were in the service of the *Chaira Bhandar* and it is on the entries in the books of that association that the case for the defence is founded. The entries on which reliance has been placed have been very fully discussed before us, and the conclusion to which I come is that they disprove the story of the prosecution, and they also go to show that Chuni and Pabitro did not stay at Benares as is alleged. Moreover, the story told by the prosecution is intrinsically improbable. The version of the journey and its coincidences as told by prosecution witness No. 80 does not commend itself to me, and the reason Lolit gives for their journey, or, as he would suggest, their flight to Benares, is not shown to have any foundation in fact. He has suggested that they left Calcutta because they had been named by Gossain, the informer in the Alipore bomb case, and he says he heard this from Pabitro. Not only, however, is it not shown that they were so named, but it so happens that Pabitro was actually examined as a witness for the Crown in that case.

Chuni's house was searched at Mazilpur, and several documents were found there on which reliance has been placed by the prosecution. The utmost they do is to show connection with the accused Pabitro, with the *Chatra Bhandar* and with some person whose address was at Dr. Sarat Mitter's at 86-1, Diamond Harbour Road, and that he had in his possession such book as *Deshar Kotha* and *Sivaji* by Sakharam Ganesh Deushkar, and this certainly cannot be taken as conclusive of his guilt. The case against Chuni Lal fails.

The Haludbari group, as argued by Counsel for the prosecution, included nine of the accused, but as two of them, Bidhu Bhusan Biswas and Monmotho Biswas, were acquitted of the Haludbari dacoity, they are obviously not properly placed in this group, which should be confined to the seven accused convicted of that offence. They are Soilen Das, Susil Biswas, Atul Mukherjee, Kiron Rai, Ganesh Das, Sailendra Chatterjee, and Upendra Kristo Deb. Of these the two first were sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment, and the remaining

five to eight years' rigorous imprisonment, in the Haludbari case.

The case against Kiron Roy, as I have already stated, has been dropped and so it only remains to be considered whether the remaining six accused of this group are guilty of the conspiracy into which we are enquiring. Their guilt of the Haludbari dacoity is established and is not questioned, and that offence is alleged to be an overt act of the conspiracy. In my opinion this is made out. Having regard to the position of these six accused the articles found on them, and all the circumstances of the case, I can come to no other conclusion than that this dacoity was the work of a conspiracy, that the conspiracy was of the character charged, and that these accused were parties to it.

The only member of the Krishnanagar group now before the Court is Suresh Mazumdar *alias* Poran, the case against the two other members of this group having been dropped in the course of the trial for want of evidence. The case against Suresh is extremely weak. The endeavour to establish his connection with the revolver used in the murder of Shamsul Alum has failed, and this was conceded by Counsel for the Crown. His connection with the *Chatra Bhandar* was merely that of a customer and can prove nothing for the purposes of this case. Then Lolit says that Suresh took him to the house of Kishori Babu, but there is no confirmation of this association, though it was open to the prosecution to have called Kishori Babu, a well known Vakil of this Court, and one of the senior members of the Pleader's Bar. Suresh's house was searched as well as the premises of the Arya Chemical Works with which he was associated, but nothing incriminating was found. The result then is that the case against Suresh Mazumdar fails.

The Nattore group consists of Sirish Sarkar and Bejoy Chakraborty. Sirish is the son of Dr. Girish Sarkar of Nattore, and the principal oral evidence against him is that of Lolit who speaks of association with him at Beliasishi, at Nattore and at Darjeeling. Lolit deposes that he met him at Beliasishi, during his flight from justice after the Netra dacoity. Now this must

have been (if at all) in May 1909, and if the account Lolit gives of his movements is even approximately true, then it must have been about the 13th or 14th of May. But it is impossible to reconcile this with what we know from other sources of Sirish's movements, and this meeting at Beliasishi cannot be accepted as true. That they met at Nattore is not questioned ; Dr. Girish, it seems, was a hospitable man who kept open house and Lolit came there. It was while he was there that he was introduced by Sirish to Bhubaneswar Singh, who was on the lookout for a tutor, and this enables us to get at a date fixed beyond dispute, for Bhubaneswar Singh is by reference to his books of account, able to fix the date when Lolit entered his service as the 17th *Jyisto* or the 31st of May 1909, and the date of his leaving as the 26th of *Assar* or the 10th of July following. This brings me to the alleged theft of a gold ornament at Patna, with which the prosecution would associate Sirish. Lolit's story is that a few days after he entered Bhubaneswar's service, Sirish went to Patna, and on his return made over to him a lump of half melted gold, which he said he brought back from Patna. The prosecution theory is that this gold represents a gold ornament stolen from Hemangini, the wife of Kedar Nath Banerjee, a Patna pleader. But Lolit's story is manifestly untrustworthy for while he would place Sirish's journey a few days after he, Lolit, entered Bhubaneswar's service, *i.e.*, in June, the theft of the gold ornament was some time before the 18th of May. But, while Lolit's story is false, there is no doubt and indeed it is not disputed, that Sirish was at Patna at the time of the alleged theft. It is however denied that Sirish had anything to do with the theft, and it was admitted on behalf of the Crown that, on the evidence, it would be impossible to convict Sirish of the theft.

No doubt gold was sold by Lolit to Jamini, a poddar at Dighapatia, on the 18th of June and in the record of the transaction in the poddar's book, the name of Sirish appears. But it so appears only on the debit side of the account, and the mode in which it is written suggests that Sirish's name was subsequently added, and this agrees with the absence of Sirish's

name from the credit entry of the transaction. Moreover, the amount of gold sold does not correspond with the weight of that stolen. Jamini declares that of the notes handed over by him on this occasion, one for Rs. 100 bore the number VA 67—87042, and this note which has been produced before us, was endorsed by Jamini on the 4th of *Assar*, the date of the sale of gold, and subsequently endorsed by Dr. Girish. Still I think it was rightly stated by Counsel for the Crown that the evidence does not prove Sirish to have been the thief, though the matter is not free from suspicion. That Sirish and Lolit went to Darjeeling is conceded, and from Exhibit 88 written on the 25th of August by Dr. Girish, his father, it appears that Sirish went up to the hills in the hopes of recovery from a somewhat distressing ailment, and from Exhibit 153 that he resided in the Lowis Jubilee Sanitarium from the 26th of August 1909. Lolit, too, it seems was ill, suffering from malaria, and Exhibit 151 shows that he resided in the Sanitarium from the 26th of August 1909. Sirish left on the 1st of October, and Lolit was arrested on the 27th.

The mere fact that Sirish and Lolit went at the same time to the Darjeeling Sanitarium would not go for much in the circumstances I have described, but what is relied on is the fact, that Lolit there gave his true name in place of the assumed name of Lal Mohan Chaudhury under which he had passed at Nattore, for this it is said shows that Sirish must have known throughout that he was passing under an assumed name, and can only have tolerated it because he was in league with him. Indeed an attempt was made to show that Sirish must otherwise have known that Lolit was passing under an assumed name by suggesting that Lolit had previously visited Nattore under his true name. But Lolit himself has exploded that theory, so that I only have to deal with the fact that Lolit gave his true name at the Sanitarium. I fail to see how that in itself can show Sirish knew when Lolit was at Nattore, that he was passing under an assumed name. Even if it be assumed that Sirish knew what name Lolit gave at the Sanitarium,—a matter not clearly

established, —that in itself would only show that he gave a different name at the Sanitarium from that under which he passed at Nattore ; it could not possibly antedate Sirish's knowledge. This then is the case against Sirish ; undoubtedly there are in it elements of suspicion, but I am not satisfied that it establishes against Sirish a conspiracy to wage war against the King.

Bejoy Kumar Chakarvarty has been convicted under the Arms Act and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment from the 15th of March 1910. This conviction is conclusive so far as it goes, and it would not be profitable to discuss its propriety. But the conviction itself would not warrant the inference that the accused was a member of this conspiracy, so Lolit again, as in so many other cases, comes forward with his timely aid. The arms found in Bejoy's possession were four revolvers, and Lolit says that he handed to Bejoy at Rajshahi five revolvers that came from Calcutta in *Assar* 1909. But this story is belated ; it is after the discovery of the revolvers at the search of the 6th of January 1910, and in his confession of the 5th of November 1909, which preceded the search, he speaks of swords only in connection with Bejoy, without a word about revolvers. It is true that it was in consequence of a statement made by Lolit that Mr. Mawson applied for warrants, but there is no suggestion that Lolit gave any information as to pistols, or that Mr. Mawson expected to find any in the office.

Then, again, it is doubtful whether Lolit ever went to Rajshahi. In his confession he mentions no such visit, and even states that in consequence of the tutorship he got in the zamindar's family, he "desisted from going to Rajshahi." Before Mr. Duval, however, he stated that he went to Rajshahi with the zamindar's leave, but he did not repeat this before us, nor was Bhubaneswar asked any question on this subject. Further than that, I find that Lolit in the course of the verification proceedings said that Bejoy was at the time Head Master of the National School, and lived at the house of Sarat Babu. Before Mr. Duval he shifted his ground, and said Bejoy told him he was living at the house of Sarat Babu, the Head Master

of the National School. Now the documentary evidence shows that Bejoy's services, as a school-master at the Bhola Nath Academy, Rajshahi, were dispensed with in November 1908, and Gangadhar Bhattacharjee, in whose *basha* he lived from 1904 to November or December 1908, deposes that Bejoy then went to Dighapattia and he did not see him in Rajshahi after that. Moreover the prosecution have not adduced evidence to support either of Lolit's two rival stories, either the first story that Bejoy was the Head Master of the National School or the altered story.

On the whole, therefore. I am unable to accept this story that Lolit went to Rajshahi, and handed over the revolvers to Bejoy. And so the endeavour to connect Bejoy with Calcutta fails, and his membership of the conspiracy is not proved.

The members of the Jowgacha group are Kalipada Chakravarty and Pulin Sarkar and they may be dismissed from consideration very briefly, for there really is no evidence against them on which any reliance can be placed. Apart from the approvers, the witnesses called against them merely speak of an association with their fellow villagers, which had nothing incriminating about it. The case fails against these two accused.

Then I come to Kartick Dutta and Tara Nath Roy Choudury whom the prosecution would place side by side, on the ground of their alleged connection with *Jugantar* newspaper.

I have already dealt with the suggestion that the *Jugantar* was a limb of this conspiracy and have shown that it has not been made good. Kartick's complicity in the Bighati dacoity cannot be questioned, but is there anything which shows that dacoity to have been the work of this conspiracy? We start with the fact that the two men convicted with Kartick of this dacoity are not alleged to be conspirators and when this was brought to the notice of Counsel for the prosecution, it was said, in explanation of this omission, that mere participation in this dacoity would not prove membership of the conspiracy. Then again Lolit did not mention Kartick as a conspirator, either in his confession or in the course of the verification, while his attempt to connect this dacoity with the conspiracy by the

story he tells of the dispute as to the Bighati loot, is manifestly absurd.

Panna Lal Chatterjee, the approver in the Bighati case, and now in the employ of the Criminal Investigation Department, attempted before Mr. Duval to connect the dacoity with the conspiracy by stating that one Keshab had told him that three of the men in the Bighati case "were of the Howrah gang." Before us he has altered his story and has deposed that he thought the three men went there from Howrah as he "inferred it from their conversation," having overheard one or two things, though he admits they did not tell him about the dacoity. But if we go back to Panna Lal's statements before Mr. Patterson in the Bighati case, there is not a word of this or of the conspiracy to overthrow the British Government, though Panna Lal, in making his confession showed every anxiety to bring the wrongdoers to book, as is apparent from his remark. "I shall tell you everything and you will please see all the members of the gang are punished."

Panna Lal's story obviously cannot be accepted : it developed to suit the exigencies of the case. Panna Lal gives evidence that Kartick took him to the *Jugantar* office, and Purna Chandra Lahiri says he saw Kartick frequently at the *Jugantar* office, but he was doing nothing ; he used to put up in the building where the offices were. Besides the *Jugantar* office it appears from Purna Chandra Lahiri's evidence that the Sumati Press was also there, and it is urged for Kartick that his presence on the premises was in connection with the press and not with the *Jugantar*. This is a point that has not been cleared up, but whichever be the true version, it matters not for the purposes of this case, in the view I take of the *Jugantar's* alleged relations with the conspiracy, into which we are enquiring.

The documentary evidence used against Kartick consists of certain letters. Exhibit 159, the Thakur letter, is in my opinion innocuous, for reasons which I will set forth when I come to discuss the case against Annoda. Nor do I think the other documents in any way go to show he was a member of this

conspiracy. The real case against Kartick is that he has been held guilty of the Bighati dacoity. I have already given my reason for thinking that dacoity was not connected with the conspiracy, and it follows that, of whatever Kartick may have been guilty, it is not proved that he was a member of this conspiracy, and so the case against him fails.

Tara Nath Roy Chowdhury has been convicted under the Arms Act and has been sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment from the 19th of May 1910. Lolit speaks of him as a conspirator, and before Mr. Duval he said, "I have known Tara Nath since 1906. He lived in Raja's Lane." As a matter of fact he had no connection with 4, Raja's Lane, until September or October 1907, and he only remained there six or seven months. More than that, I find that in the verification proceedings Lolit pointed out 3-1, Raja's Lane, as Tara Nath's residence, whereas in fact he lived at 4-1. Then, again, it is significant that though Lolit mentions Tara Nath in his confession, he makes no reference to arms being taken to his house from Colonel Nandi's garden, which is the story he now tells.

That Tara Nath lived in Benares and was arrested there is established, but it is denied that he associated there with Lalit and there is no reliable evidence to that effect. So, again, it is clearly proved that Tara Nath was the Manager of the *Jugantar*, and the period of his management was from November 1907 to April 1908, but whatever may be his criminal responsibility for what was written during that period, his managership does not prove his membership of this conspiracy, for reasons which I have already set forth. We have a confession and a retraction by Tara Nath but, giving them all their due effect, they fall short of connecting Taranath with this conspiracy. We are only concerned with the question whether it has been proved that Tara Nath is guilty of the conspiracy to which this case relates, and not with any other delinquencies he may have committed, and the evidence fails to prove him to be a conspirator for the purposes of this case.

The *Chatra Bhandar* group consists of Pabitra Dutta, Annoda Rai, Horendra Banerjee and Narendra Nath Bose.

For reasons I have already set forth I hold that the *Chatra Bhandar* is not proved to be a limb of the conspiracy, and mere association with it will not suffice to establish the guilt of these four accused. Nor does it advance the case against Pabitra that he was associated with Annoda in the management of the *Chatra Bhandar*. In this view, the case against Pabitra may be dismissed with few words. It is not proved that he managed, controlled or worked for the *Jugantar* and the argument based on his alleged connection with that paper fails. At the same time the prosecution has wholly failed to prove any criminal association between Pabitra and Tara Nath or anyone else at Benares ; indeed, as I have already shown, the documentary evidence casts grave doubt on the truth of Lolit's story. Pabitra, therefore, is not proved to be guilty.

The case against Annoda Rai or Annoda Kabiraj must also fail. It is in the May complaint that his name first appears, and he was not mentioned by Lolit until he gave his evidence before Mr. Duval. He was arrested on the 26th of May 1910, and placed before the Magistrate on the 27th. He was not, however, identified by Lolit till the 15th of June though on the 6th both he and Lolit were in the Magistrate's Court. The prosecution would make much of Exhibit 159, the Thakur letter, as it has been termed, and it is necessary that I should examine this letter and the evidence relating to it with some care. It is a letter purporting to be written by Kartick to the Kabiraj and though the handwriting is not proved, it is not disputed that Kartick was the writer. The prosecution would have it that the mention of a Thakur was a cryptic reference to a revolver, that the allusion to a printer was the proffer of Kartick's services to find a substitute in place of the printer of the *Jugantar* who had been convicted, and that the Baikuntha named in the letter was the convicted printer. The interpretation placed on the word "Thakur" was sought to be fortified by the evidence of Panna Lal, the approver in the Bighati case, to whom I have already referred. He was asked in the course of his examination-in-chief, "Had you any secret Code" ? His answer was, "Yes. We used to call revolvers Thakur, Indur, Pakhi." The records in this

case furnish us with a suggestion as to how this evidence originated. There was nothing as to this in Panna Lal's statements before Mr. Patterson. We first find a reference to the secret code when Panna Lal passed into the hands of Mr. Sati Prosad Ganguly for the purpose of verification, a class of work on which this Magistrate seems to be frequently employed, for in this case we find him conducting verification proceedings in connection with Lolit and Jotin, and he has told us that he verified the confessions in the Bighati case and the Khulna conspiracy case.

Now in his confession which was being verified by Mr. Sati Prosad Ganguly, Panna Lal said nothing about Annoda in connection with 202, Cornwallis Street, nor did he say a word about a secret code. And yet, when he was taken by Mr. Ganguly to 202, Cornwallis Street, where Annoda's name was prominently placed on a placard, he volunteers the remark "we had code words." It is asked with considerable pertinence, what was the association of ideas that prompted this remark? True, the Thakur letter had been found at the search of Annoda's premises, but how did Panna Lal know this or that Annoda had anything to do with the secret meaning ascribed to the word Thakur? Perhaps a consideration of a few dates may help to the solution of this question. Annoda's house was searched on the 20th of September 1908, and Inspector Mullick of the Criminal Investigation Department in answer to Counsel for the Crown has given us the history of certain documents, including the Thakur letter. He has told us that this letter, with other documents, was, after the search, produced before Mr. Denham, the Special Assistant to the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Special Department, who took a note of the letters he thought important. Inspector Mullick received this letter and other documents back from Mr. Denham, and retained them in his custody until they were produced before Mr. Duval. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of Inspector Mullick's evidence, and in fact, he had a note of the letters to which he has so deposed. We see, therefore, that the Thakur letter was in the custody of the Criminal Investigation Department. But so was

Panna Lal for a short time ; he was arrested on the 9th November 1908 and he was for some days kept at Royd Street, the office of the Criminal Investigation Department. Then he was taken by Mr. Ganguly for verification proceedings, which were completed on the 22nd of January 1909.

I have set out the facts without comment, for I think they furnish the best answer to the problem, how the sight of Annoda's name at 202, Cornwallis Street, prompted Panna Lal to tell the verifying officer that there was a secret code and, in my opinion, the facts furnish an explanation which shows the worthlessness of Panna Lal's suggestion that Thakur means revolver, a suggestion for which there is no warrant in the voluminous records of this case. I feel no doubt that the origin of Panna Lal's statement was the Thakur letter, and at the same time it has been demonstrated to my satisfaction that the reference in that letter was not to a revolver but to a Thakur in its proper sense.

It is necessary that I should now examine this Thakur letter, Exhibit 159, with some minuteness. A superficial reading of it by itself would lend some colour to the prosecution theory, but Mr. Sen Gupta who has appeared for Annoda very properly insisted that all the documents found at the search of Annoda's premises should be produced, and this ultimately resulted in his being able to place before the Court Exhibit V. In all fairness this document should from the first have been placed by the prosecution on the record, and we owe it simply to the commendable persistence and industry of Mr. Sen Gupta that this most important document is before the Court. Now, this letter, Exhibit V, is dated the 18th Aghrahyayan 1314, that is the 4th of December 1907, while the Thakur letter is written on the 22nd of January 1908. Both refer to the purchase of a Thakur, and though the prosecution place on the word in the second letter a sinister gloss, it is not suggested that in the first letter the word is patent of any but its ordinary meaning. The first letter points to Ananta Kumar Chakravarty as negotiating the purchase of the Thakur and the second points to Ananta Babu as the person who will pay, and the identity of these two cannot reasonably

be doubted, and without prolonging a critical examination of the two letters, it is enough for me to say that I am satisfied both letters refer to the same Thakur, and that the Thakur in the first letter is clearly a Thakur in its ordinary sense, and that the Thakur in the second letter is not a revolver.

Though it was on the meaning wrongly imputed to the word Thakur that the prosecution principally relied, they also read in the mention of Baikuntha a reference to Baikuntha Acharya, the convicted printer of the *Jugantar*. This reading, however, is not only fanciful, but there is reason to think that it is baseless, and that the reference was to Baikuntha Nath Chakravarti, whose connexion with Annoda is shown by documentary evidence, and who is stated before us to have been his relative. And finally it is said by the prosecution that the offer to find a printer means a printer for the *Jugantar*. This is mere speculation, and the defence have urged on us an explanation that is at least as plausible, and I am disposed to think more probable, which goes to show that the writer of the letter had not the *Jugantar* in mind.

I have thought it necessary to discuss this letter at length as so much stress was laid on it against both Kartick and Annoda. I have set forth the grounds on which I hold this letter to be innocent of the meaning attributed to it by the prosecution, and I have drawn attention to the dates which appear to me to show how it was sought to bolster up this meaning by the evidence of Panna Lal. There is nothing to show that the Annoda mentioned in Exhibit 217 is this accused ; on the contrary it seems even more probable that the person referred to is Annoda Charan Roy, said to be an uncle of Tara Nath. That Annoda's name should appear in Exhibit 115 as a subscriber to the *Jugantar* proves nothing, for it is shown that this paper was bought far and wide. Exhibit 274 (1) (b) is explained by Exhibit 314, and it is quite clear that these letters contain no sinister significance. Therefore the case against Annoda must fail.

Harendra Banerjee has been treated by the prosecution as a member of the *Chatra Bhandar* group, though why he should be so ranged is not obvious, as his only connection with the

Chatra Bhandar is that he dealt with it, while there is nothing to connect him with the other members of the group. Counsel for the Prosecution has utilized this grouping purpose of connecting the *Chatra Bhandar* and the Haludbari groups, but this contention cannot succeed. Lolit's testimony connecting Horen with the conspiracy is unconfirmed, as is that of Jotin Hazra, and it is the only documentary evidence that calls for consideration. The document on which reliance is principally placed is Exhibit 162, but I am unable to treat anything in this letter as a confession of guilt by Horen. The utmost that can be said is that it may attribute guilt to Soilen, but certainly not that Haren was a partner in that guilt.

The reference to $\frac{1A}{251}$ and $\frac{1A}{254}$ in Exhibit 161 (.) when read in conjunction with Exhibit 87 (2) may give rise to some suspicion, but it is a suspicion that owes its existence and force to lack of knowledge. This suspicion may have been worthy of further investigation, but as things stand, we have no clear indication what these numbers mean. The document in which they have been found is a note-book, and the entries in it point to Horen's being concerned in some business, possibly that of a broker. In two instances I find names of persons with their addresses given in conjunction with these supposed symbols. Thu I find $\frac{1A}{258}$ evidently referring to Radha Benode Bose, 35-1-1, Mondol Street, Pathuriaghata, and $\frac{1A}{259}$ to Amrita Lal Banerjee, 4-1, Gomes Lane Calcutta. Now neither of these men is named as a conspirator in the charge, nor is there any evidence led or suggestion made that they are not perfectly respectable individuals. No endeavour has been made to explain who or what they are, and, in the circumstances, it would be wrong for us to allow the suspicion of the prosecution to take the place of proof. In my opinion the case against Horen fails.

The last of this so-called *Chatra Bhandar* group is Norendra Nath Bose : why he should have been so classed is not clear, unless it was hoped by this means to establish a connection with the Kidderpore group through Bimola Deb, an idea that

has failed in consequence of the prosecution's determination not to proceed with the case against Bimola. Of the overt acts set forth in the complaint, Lolit would only connect him with the murder of Nando Lal Banerjee and the Netra dacoity, but as to neither is there any corroboration. That Noren was at Cheddapathar and at Benares has not been denied, but it is urged that his presence at those places implies nothing to his detriment. First, I will take up the prosecution case as to Cheddapathar. It is said by the prosecution that it was used as a place for the conspirators to meet, and for arms to be stored, and that the work there was divided, some for instance recruiting Bengalis, some Sonthals. But there is nothing that supports this beyond Lolit's word, and it is at least problematical whether Lolit ever was there, when regard is had to the variance in his successive stories, and the difficulty of reconciling his description with the place as it actually is. I do not overlook the fact that evidence is given, and notably by Keshab Chandra Banerjee, of Lolit's having been there. Now Keshab left Cheddapathar last *Bhadra* ; of that there seems to be no doubt. But when he goes on to say, as he does in his examination-in-chief, that Lolit was there in *Magh* or *Falgun*, preceding the *Bhadra* in which he left, he is obviously wrong, for not only was Lolit then in custody, but the prosecution case is that it was in 1906, not 1909 that Lolit was there,—and I will assume he was,—the evidence does not disclose anything sinister in the life at Cheddapathar. The young men seem to have erected a *khamarbari*, and to have cut down the surrounding jungle with a view to reclaiming land for cultivation. It cannot be suggested that there is anything that shows that arms were stored there, and I say this notwithstanding the evidence in all seriousness adduced before us that five bamboo bows were bought from one of the neighbouring jungle folk, and even though the story as to one revolver be credited.

Then there is the evidence of Noren's presence at Benares to be considered. It is not denied ; on the contrary it is the case for the defence that Noren took his old and ailing mother to Benares, and this, it is said, was a natural thing for him to do,

regard being had to his mother's state. He further says that he started a shop there, and this agrees with the prosecution story. But he denies that this was done, as the prosecution say, with conspiracy funds, nor is there any trustworthy evidence in support of the prosecution theory. The evidence is that Noren started the shop in September 1908, and attended to it until September 1909, when it was sold. Reliance is in fact placed on this to refute Lolit's story that Noren was at the Netra dacoity, for it is urged that it is difficult to believe that Noren should have left his shop at Benares to attend the dacoity. The refutation is not conclusive, but the facts cast grave doubt on the truth of Lolit's story, more especially when regard is had to the statement of Kali Krishna Chakravarti, prosecution witness No. 79 who declares that Noren was all through at Benares. Nothing obviously can be made of the fact that Noren dealt with the *Chatra Bhandar*.

Exhibit 103 (5) is sought to be used against him and principally because it contains the name "Lolit" and because it indicates that on the 4th and 5th October 1909, he met "Hrishikesh" and "Gonesh." There is nothing to show what Lolit is here intended, or that Gonesh is the accused in this case, but the suggestion that Hrishikesh is Hrishikesh Kanjilal, the accused in the Alipore Bomb Case, is reckless, seeing that Hrishikesh Kanjilal was then, and for months before had been, in prison. The case against Noren fails.

The next group consists of Monmatho Nath Biswas, Bidhu Bhusan Biswas, Rampada Mukherjee and Bhupendra Nath Rai Chowdhury, who are shown to have been associated at Rampore Boalia in the district of Rajshahi, where they were fellow students.

Mr. P. L. Roy included Monmatho Nath Biswas and Bidhu Bhusan Biswas in the Haludbari-group, but for that I have shown there was no justification. According to the evidence in this case their activities were confined to Rajshahi. Rampada Mukherjee and Bhupendra Nath Rai Chowdhury were treated by the Counsel for the Crown as constituting the Raita group, but their only association with Raita is the mention of their

names in connection with the Raita dacoity in Sushil's retracted confession. This dacoity was committed as far back as November 1908 ; no steps have been taken against these accused on the basis of their being concerned in that offence, and there is no evidence against either of them of being so concerned, and in the circumstances this retracted confession certainly would not support a conviction against them. Therefore their being grouped as connected with Raita rests on no sound foundation. It is in these circumstances that I think these four accused ought to be considered as the Rajshahi group, and in the view I take of the evidence it is unnecessary to treat their cases at length.

Monmatho is not even named by Lolit in his confession, though he there names certain persons as conspirators who reside in Cnilti-Beliasishi. In his deposition before Mr. Duval, however, he names him as a conspirator, and also here. But beyond so naming him with, a very great number of others, he says nothing of him and does not implicate him in anything specific. It is to be noticed that between the date of Lolit's confession and deposition, Monmatho had been arrested for the Haludbari dacoity. Then, what other evidence is there against Monmatho ?—merely that of association with fellow-students at Rajshahi and *lathi*-play. The evidence falls far short of establishing that these four youths who stand isolated from the rest of the accused, were members of the conspiracy charged in this case. I do not overlook Bhupen's diary, but I have carefully taken it into consideration in arriving at the conclusion I have expressed. The case against Monmatho fails.

The case against Bidhu Bhusan Biswas of association in Rajshahi is substantially the same as that against Monmatho. In addition to that Lolit declares that after the Netra dacoity Bidhu, having met him at 10-1, Mussulmanpara Lane, took him to Beliasishi. But, apart from the absence of any corroboration, Lolit's story is open to grave doubt. No adverse inference can be drawn from the fact that Sushil and Bidhu, who were cousins, were seen together at Nattore, even if credence be given to the somewhat improbable story of the witness who declares he so saw them. The case against him fails.

Against Rampada Mukherjee the evidence is even weaker, and there is nothing against him on which a conviction could be based. The case against him fails.

Bhupendra Nath Rai Chowdhury is the author of the diary to which I have already referred. Sushil mentions him in his confession in connection with Raita, and some reliance has been placed on the school register for this purpose, but the confession has been retracted and Sushil afterwards failed to identify Bhupen. It is obviously impossible to hold that Bhupen was at Raita. The exhibits do not advance the case against Bhupen, nor does the fact of his previous conviction. The result is that in my opinion the prosecution have failed to show his membership of this conspiracy.

It cannot I think be disputed that these four young Rajshahi men are, or have been, troublesome characters, and the description "rowdies" attributed to some of them in Bhupen's diary is probably not far wide of the mark. But that is a different matter from holding them members of the particular conspiracy to wage war against the King : the prosecution have failed to link them with any of the other accused, nor have they shown them to be parties to the conspiracy charged in this case.

This then ends the case against all the accused, and the result is we all hold the charge under section 121-A, of the Penal Code, established against Soilen Das, Sushil Biswas, Atul Mukherjee, Gonesh Das, Soilendra Nath Chatterjee and Upendra Kristo Deb.

The rest of the accused must, in our opinion, be acquitted of the charges against them, and, with the exception of those at present serving sentences that have been inflicted on them, they must be set at liberty as the law directs.

It only remains to consider what sentences should be passed on those whom the Court holds guilty of the offence with which they stand charged. The sentence that they have merited is in our opinion eight years' transportation from this date, and that is the sentence we would have passed but for the fact that they are already undergoing sentences as the result of their conviction in the Haludbari case : we must have regard to these sentences

and to the somewhat inconvenient provisions of sections 397 and 398 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and this accounts for the form in which our sentence is framed.

The Court sentences Soilen Das and Sushil Biswas to two years' rigorous imprisonment, and directs that the sentence on each shall commence at the expiration of the imprisonment to which he has been previously sentenced in the Haludbari case, and the Court sentences Atul Mukerji, Gonesh Das, Soilendra Nath Chatterjee and Upendra Kristo Deb to one year's rigorous imprisonment, and directs that the sentence on each shall commence at the expiration of the imprisonment to which he has been previously sentenced in the Haludbari case.

I would only add my appreciation of the admirable temper with which this long and anxious case has been conducted on both sides, and my acknowledgment of the assistance we have received.

NOTES

1. Sir Andrew Fraser was one of the architects of partition of Bengal. As Chief Commissioner of the then Central Provinces, he suggested in an official letter in 1901 that Orissa should be transferred to the Central Provinces. Early in 1903, he, as Lt. Governor of Bengal, submitted a comprehensive scheme of Partition of Bengal to Lord Curzon. The Viceroy gave his general approval to the scheme within a few months.

Sir Andrew Fraser was shot at in a public meeting at Over-toun hall, Calcutta, on 7 November 1908. He escaped with minor injury. The assailant, Jiten Roy Chaudhury, was arrested on the spot.

2. Whether the Naraingarh outrage was the first proof is doubtful. The Sedition Committee gives the date of the incident as 6 December 1907. The Lt.-Governor's train was derailed by a bomb, the explosion making a hole 5 ft. deep and 5 ft. wide. The committee reports that "there is information to show that in October 1907 there were two plots to blow up the Lt. Governor's train." In the Committee's view the first attempt to commit "outrage" was made in August 1906. The plot was to rob a widow's house at Rangpur; it was abandoned because "the intending robbers", on arrival at the scene of operations, heard that there was a sub-inspector in the village.

3. The news that Assam with Dacca, Chittagong and Rajsahi Divisions of Bengal would be constituted in a separate province first appeared in the Calcutta Press on 6 July 1905, and next day it was officially announced from Simla.

4. Sir Andrew Fraser's comprehensive scheme for the partition of Bengal, as approved by Lord Curzon, was published in the *India Gazette* in December 1903.

5. Jatra Mohan Sen—A prominent lawyer of Chittagong and father of J. M. Sengupta. Jatra Mohan was president of Chittagong Bar Association.

6. In 1838, the landed gentry of Calcutta had formed a society for the protection of their rights under the name of "The

Landholders Society". The upper class landholders and the middle class radicals were both involved in political agitation. In 1851, they joined together to establish the British Indian Association. Its first president was Radha Kanto Deb and its first secretary, Debendra Nath Tagore.

7. Maharaja Surya Kanta Acharya of Mymensingh was one of the leaders of anti-partition movement. Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea in his autobiography '*A Nation In Making*' wrote that among the Zamindars of Bengal there never was a finer or stronger personality. Surya Kanta was Lord Curzon's host in Mymensingh "but he told Lord Curzon with quiet and dignified firmness that he would regard the partition of Bengal as a grave disaster, and that he was opposed to it".

8. Nawab Salimullah of Dacca had at first denounced the partition scheme as a "bastardly arrangement". He was won over by Lord Curzon who gave the Nawab a loan of £100,000 from the public exchequer. On 16 October 1905, the day the partition scheme took effect, Nawab Salimullah called a Mohammedan Provincial Conference at Dacca which hailed the decision of the Government to create the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam and the appointment of Sir Bampfylde Fuller as its first Lt.-Governor. At the conference a new organization called Mohammedan Provincial Union, with Nawab Salimullah as its patron, was formed. The Nawab played a leading role in the formation of the All-India Muslim League in December 1906. It was Nawab Salimullah, who moved a resolution at a meeting of "Mussalmans from all parts of India assembled at Dacca" that a political association be formed, styled the All-India Muslim League. He was supported by Hakim Ajmal Khan, and the resolution was unanimously passed.

9. The Indian Association was inaugurated at a meeting in Calcutta on 26 July 1876 with Shyama Churn Sharma-Sarkar in the chair. The first executive committee of the Association consisted of: Surendra Nath Banerjea, Nagendra Nath Chatterjee, Gurudas Banerjea, Shiva Nath Shastri, Dwarkanath Ganguli, Rajkrishna Mukherjee, Bamacharan Banerjee, Ram-

eshwar Malia, Kshetra Chandra Gupta, Chandra Nath Bose, Monomohun Ghose, Sarada Charan Mitra, Umesh Chandra Datta, Kali Nath Datta, Nobo Gopal Mitra, Nil Kamal Mitra (Allahabad), Rajnarain Bose, Surya Kumar Sarbadhikary, Kedar Nath Chaudhury, Prosad Das Mallik, Krishna Mohan Mallik, Bholanath Chandra, Aghore Nath Kumar, Sreenath Dutta, Jaygovinda Som, Ananda Mohan Bose, Secretary, and Akshay Chandra Sarkar and Jogendra Nath Bidyabhusan, Asst. Secretaries.

10. Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925)—Known as father of Indian nationalism. He was in the second batch of Indians who successfully competed in the Indian Civil Service examination. James Campbell Kerr in his *History of Political Trouble in India 1907-1917* writes that Surendranath was removed from the service in 1874 as he was found guilty of "falsehood and of a palpable abuse of judicial powers". Here is what Surendranath says about the episode in his autobiography :

"At last the climax was reached in connection with a theft case in which Judisthir was the accused. The man was charged with the theft of a boat. The case was originally on the file of Mr. Posford, but was transferred to me. Owing to my heavy work it had to be postponed from time to time. On December 31, 1872, an order was passed (and it bore my initials) that the accused should be entered in the *Ferari* list, the list of absconding prisoners. As a matter of fact the man had not absconded, and the object of the order was to avoid giving an explanation for the long pendency of the case. It was an artifice that was sometimes resorted to by the ministerial officers to save themselves from censure. In the case of a very young and inexperienced officer like myself, delay in the disposal of cases would be regarded by the superior authorities as a fault of the *Peshkar* (or ministerial servant) rather than of the officer, whom he is expected to guide and lead in matters of office procedure. I signed the order along with a heap of other papers. My attention was not drawn to it ; nor did I know it or understand the significance of the order. When called upon to give an explana-

tion about another case I inadvertently offered an explanation about this. If I had knowingly signed the order and knew its significance, such a mistake would have been impossible ; for then I would have at once remembered that, the man's name being in the *Ferari* list, no explanation could possibly be required. The Magistrate called for the records, and asked me for a full explanation, which I gave. He wrote to the district Judge, who addressed the High Court, and the Government was moved. A Commission was appointed under Act xxxix of 1850 to enquire into the whole matter.

The Commission consisted of three European officers, Mr. H. T. Prinsep, who afterwards rose to be a Judge of the High Court, Mr. H. J. Reynolds, who subsequently became a member of the Board of Revenue, and Major Helroyd of the Assam Commission. There were fourteen charges, but substantially they resolved themselves into two, namely, that I had dishonestly entered Judisthir's name in the *Ferari* list, knowing that he was not an absconding prisoner, and, secondly, that, when called for an explanation, I had falsely pleaded ignorance and said that I knew nothing at all about it. There was a further charge, that I had dishonestly disposed of the case about Judisthir and acquitted him to avoid an explanation.

I prayed for the hearing of the case in Calcutta, and, further, that I should be provided by Government with counsel for my defence. Both the prayers were rejected. I was defended by Mr. Montriou, and the Commission permitted me personally to put in a few arguments at the end of the trial. Some of my friends had suggested that Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, who was then rising to the position which he subsequently occupied at the Bar, should be engaged as my counsel. But it was thought advisable, in view of the feeling which had been evoked among the officials, that an England-returned Bengalee barrister should not defend an England-returned Bengalee Civilian.

The Commissioners found me guilty of the charges, but they made no recommendation. I returned to Calcutta from Sylhet and obtained a copy of the report, without, however, the recommendations of the Government of India, which, as I

subsequently found, were for my dismissal from the Service with a compassionate allowance of Rs. 50 a month. (*A Nation In Making* 28-29).

11. Sitanath Roy—Raja Sitanath Roy of Bhagyakul was a prominent member of the Bengal Landholders' Association and a staunch critic of the partition proposal. He was one of the directors of Indian Stores, founded in 1902 with a capital of Rs. 5 lakhs.

12. Sir Henry Cotton (1845-1915) had succeeded Sir William Ward as Chief Commissioner of Assam. Sir William had suggested in 1896 that not only the Chittagong Division but also the two districts of Dacca and Mymensing should be incorporated in Assam. Sir Henry characterised the proposal for the transfer of Chittagong Division as "ill-advised" and that of Dacca and Mymensingh as "unthinkable". Ward's scheme was, as a result, dropped. Cotton was also Chief Secretary of Bengal. He presided over the twentieth session of the Indian National Congress in Bombay in 1904. In his presidential address he declared : "The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of a federation of free and separate States, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing colonies, each with its own autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of Great Britain."

13. The resolution was moved by Ambika Charan Majumdar and seconded by Asutosh Chaudhuri. The conference was attended by more than 300 delegates from the districts and leaders of different parties and sections of people. Mr. Cotton condemned the proposal for partition and implored the Government to try other means for the administration of the province.

14. Dr. R. C. Majumdar says the news that Assam with Dacca, Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions of Bengal would be constituted as a separate province first appeared in the Calcutta Press on 6 July 1905, and next day it was officially announced from Simla. The revised scheme of partition was conveyed to the public in the form of a Government Resolution, dated 19th July, and published in the Calcutta Press on the 20th. (*Struggle For Freedom*).

15. Surendranath Banerjea was the editor of the paper. On 7 July 1905 it published a leading article under the caption "A Grave National Disaster", warning that Bengal was on the threshold of an agitation which, for its intensity and its universality, will be unrivalled in the annals of the province.

16. Bhupendra Nath Bose (1859-1924) : A Moderate who presided over the 1914 Session of the Congress. In his presidential address he said that India wants that her government should be consistent with her growing self-respect and intellectuality, that her government should be an autonomous Government under the British Empire.

17. Ambika Charan Majumdar (1851-1922) presided over the Town Hall meeting against partition on 7 August 1905. He was president of the 31st session of the Indian National Congress at Lucknow in 1916.

18. Jogesh Chander Chaudhuri was a member of the Calcutta High Court Bar and founder of the Weekly Notes, a law journal. It was he who first started an industrial exhibition of *Swadeshi* articles as an annexe to the Indian National Congress. That was in 1896, and a similar exhibition on a much larger scale was again held under his management in 1906, in connection with the Calcutta Congress of that year.

19. Lalmohan Ghose (1849-1909), a barrister, was deputed to England by the Indian Association to present the Civil Service memorial. The Indian Association deputed him to England for a second time. Surendranath Banerjea records that during his stay on this occasion he stood as a candidate for parliamentary election in the Liberal interest ; and if it were not for the Irish vote that went against him, almost at the last moment, he would have been entitled to the high distinction reserved for India's Grand Old Man, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, of being the first Indian member of Parliament. At any rate he prepared the ground and was a pioneer in the cause. Lalmohan Ghose was president of the Madras session of the Indian National Congress in 1903.

20. About Aswini kumar Dutta (1856-1923) of Barisal James Campbell Kerr writes in his *Political Trouble in India 1907-1917* : He began to agitate against the Partition of Bengal

even before it took place, and in the Autumn of 1905 Lord Curzon was burnt in effigy in the compound of his institution (Braja Mohan Institution). Throughout the following years he was a leader of the agitation in Eastern Bengal, and his institution was a centre of disaffection, almost all the processions and demonstrations in Barisal beginning or ending in the compound of his college. He took a prominent part in organising volunteers, and was president, until his deportation, of the *Swadesh Bandhab Samiti*, which was declared to be an unlawful association under the new Act in January, 1909. In order to gain the confidence of the people he did a good deal of charitable work through his Samiti and otherwise, and in the scarcity of 1906 he was able to collect Rs. 96,000 which were used in relieving the sufferings of the *bhadralok* class (the class to which he himself belongs).

Aswini Kumar Dutt was so notoriously the leader of the agitation in Eastern Bengal that his deportation was recommended by the Local Government in July, 1907, but it was negatived by the Government of India. Attempts were made to deal with the local unrest in Bakarganj District by increasing the police force and applying the ordinary law, but this was found to be ineffectual. Aswini himself left Barisal for a time; he attended the National Congress at Surat in December, 1907, and when it was broken up by the extremists under Tilak he took the side of the latter. Thereafter he toured in Bombay and the Central Provinces, making speeches in the extremist interest and keeping in touch with B. G. Tilak of Poona and G. S. Khaparde of Amraoti. He returned to Barisal in July, 1908, and renewed the Boycott agitation there. At an extremist meeting at Batajore in October, 1908, a song was sung asking the audience "to gain their independence by the aid of the sword," but the singers were stopped by Aswini with the remark that "the time had not yet come for such songs." He was deported in December, 1908, and his case and that of K. K. Mit'ar were those which aroused the greatest amount of criticism in Bengal and throughout India. Attention was chiefly directed to the good work his "volunteers" had done in connection with

famine and similar matters, and his extremist activities were denied or ignored. On his return from deportation in February, 1910, he excused himself from taking further part in politics on account of his age and ill-health.

21. In *First Spark of Revolution* Arun Chandra Guha says : "Sonar Bangla" was the first under-ground publication of revolutionary literature. It was secretly printed in the Sandhya Press in February 1906. Khudiram had been arrested for distributing "Sonar Bangla" but was acquitted of sedition charge.

22. The boycott resolution was moved by Narendranath Sen, editor of the *Indian Mirror*, the only newspaper at the time in Bengal under Indian management and control. In his autobiography Surendranath has recorded that he was commissioned to consult some English friends as to whether they would advise such a resolution and what should be its form. Maharaja Manindra Nandi presided.

23. Romesh Chandra Mitter (1840-1899) was one of the five judges constituting the Full Bench of the Calcutta High Court which sentenced Surendranath Banerjea to two months' imprisonment for contempt of court. Mr. Justice Mitter gave a dissenting judgment, insisting upon a fine only. The day before the judgment was delivered the Chief Justice, Sir Richard Garth had seen Mitter at his residence and had talked and argued with him with a view to persuading him to agree with the majority but all in vain. Mitter was chairman, Reception Committee of the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1896. Surendranath said of him he was not only a great judge but a great man.

24. *Swadeshi Bhandar* was located at 82, Harrison Road (now Mahatma Gandhi Road).

25. *Lakshmi Bhandar* was founded in 1903.

26. Daughter of Svarnakumari Devi and niece of Rabin-dranath, Sarala Devi (1873-1950) was pioneer of revolutionary movement in Bengal. It was to Sarala Devi that Aurobindo Ghosh had sent Jatindranath Banerjee (later Niralamba Swami) for help in setting up a secret revolutionary organization. Sarala

Devi put Jatindranath in touch with P. Das. By all accounts she was a remarkable Lady. In October 1902 she started the *Birastami* celebrations as part of her programme of physical training for young men. Next year at her initiative the *Pratapa-ditya Utsav* was started. Kerr says of her that she was one of the originators of the *Swadeshi* Movement in Calcutta, long before the partition, and she tried to rouse the people by reviving old festivals, starting music clubs for the cultivation of national songs, and setting up a kind of "Hero worship" by means of plays describing the doings of the Hindu heroes of the past. She was one of the first to start *lathi*-play and sword exercise in Bengal, and from 1902 to 1904 she had an athletic club, where these exercises were taught, at her father's house at Ballygunge (26 Ballygunge Circular Road). The objects of these movements were to rouse the national spirit and revive the national strength of Bengal, and the later disturbance in that province were the natural development of her work. In 1905 she was married to Ram Bhaj Datta Chudhuri, pleader of the chief Court, Lahore. For some years afterwards they were both regarded as extremists, but since 1909 they have taken a much more moderate line.

27. Pulin Behari Das—(1877-1941) Captain-General of the *Anusilan Samiti* of Dacca. Pulin Das, a pupil of Murtaza, came to politics when he was a student. In 1906 P. Mitra, Director of *Anusilan Samiti*, Calcutta, accompanied by Bepin Chandra Pal, toured the districts of East Bengal. In Dacca they came in touch with Pulin Das, and the Dacca *Anusilan Samiti* was started with Das as the organiser. When *Anusilan Samiti* was banned in east and north Bengal in 1908, it had nearly 300 branches in these regions, all of them organised under the leadership of Pulin Das. Pulin Das was locked up under Regulation III of 1818 and deported from Bengal. In 1910, the Dacca conspiracy case was instituted, and Pulin Das and 43 others were put on trial. The High Court upheld the convictions of 14 of the accused. Pulin Das was sentenced to transportation for seven years and two of his most prominent followers, Ashutosh Das Gupta and Jyotirmoy Roy to six years each.

28. Thakur Sahib was a noble of Udaipur State with the title of Thakur. The Thakur, according to *Sri Aurobindo on Himself*, was not a member of the Council of a secret society in Bombay. "He stood above it as the leader of the whole movement while the Council helped him to organise Maharashtra now the Mahratta States. He himself worked principally upon the Indian Army of which he had already won over two or three regiments." Sri Aurobindo took a special journey into central India to meet and speak with Indian Sub-officers and men of one of these regiments.

29. Manmohan Ghose, poet and Shakespearean scholar, who was teacher of English at Calcutta's Presidency College.

30 The Sedition Committee report says that in the year 1897, when the devastation caused by the plague led to the institution of house-to-house visitations and the compulsory evacuation of plague infected houses in Poona, much alarm and resentment was aroused. On May 4, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a Chitpavan Brahmin, published an article in his paper, the *Kesari* (the most influential Marathi paper in Western India), imputing not merely subordinate officials but to the Government itself a deliberate direction to oppress the people. He described Mr. Rand, Plague Commissioner, as tyrannical and stated that the Government was practising oppression. "The 22nd of June was the occasion of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria and it was marked on that night by the murder, by the brothers Chapekar, of two Government officers, Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst, while returning from a gathering in celebration of the coronation at Government House, Ganeshkhind, Poona. There appears to be no doubt that the intended victim was Mr. Rand, who had become unpopular owing to his being the officer charged with the enforcement of measures for the eradication of plague. The murder of Lt. Ayerst was apparently an accident. Damodar Chapekar was tried and convicted of the double murder on 22nd June." Arun Guha in his *First Spark of Revolution* writes that two Dravid brothers who helped the Government in arresting and convicting the Chapekars were

rewarded by the Government ; but they were subsequently murdered by other members of the Chapekar Association. For this murder, Mahadeo Ranade and Wasudeo Chapekar were hanged. A fuller account is available in Kerr's book : There were three Chapekar brothers in the plot. Damodar, Balkrishna and Wasudev, the sons of a mendicant Brahmin pujari (priest) named Hari Chapekar of Poona. Mainly on information given by two Brahmin brothers, G. S. and R. S. Dravid, Damodar Chapekar was arrested in Bombay in October, 1897, and confessed his guilt ; he admitted that his accomplice was his brother Balkrishna, and explained that they had tracked Mr. Rand for weeks before the murder, looking for a favourable opportunity. He was found guilty of the murder on 3rd February, 1898, and executed on April 18th. Meantime search was being made for his brother Balkrishna, who had absconded, and he was arrested in December, 1898, in Hyderabad State where he had found refuge with a gang of dacoits. He also made a confession disclosing his own part in the plot, but before he was placed on his trial further developments took place. When the murders were committed a reward of Rs. 20,000 was proclaimed, and after Damodar was arrested half this sum was paid to the informers, the two brothers Dravid. On the arrest of Balkrishna they claimed the remaining half, and when this was refused G. S. Dravid wrote a letter to the press protesting against the injustice of Government in withholding what was due to them. But a different reward was in store ; on the night of 8th February, 1899 the two brothers were called away from a game of cards in the upper room of a house in Poona, on the pretext that they were wanted by the police, and when they reached the street they were shot by two men who were lying in wait and they died next day. Suspicion fell on the third Chapekar brother, Wasudev, and on M. V. Ranade whose name has been already mentioned, and next day they were taken to the police station where the former drew out a pistol and attempted to shoot Head Constable Ramji Panda who had taken a prominent part in all these enquiries. The bullet missed its mark and Wasudev was secured. He and Ranade admitted

the murder of the Dravids, as well as an attempt to shoot Head Constable Ramji Panda in the street a few days before, which failed only because the bullet fell out of the pistol before the shot was fired. They also admitted their complicity in the Jubilee Day murders, and were placed on their trial for this along with Balkrishna and separately for the murder of the informers. In March, 1899, they were all three found guilty and executed in May.

31. Around 1895 Damodar and Balkrishna Chapekar of Poona formed a society for physical and military training which they called the "Society for the removal of obstacles to the Hindu Religion."

32. In the beginning, samitis and organizations were engaged mainly in physical and moral training of members, social work, propagating the *Swadeshi* message, and implementing passive resistance through a social boycott of recalcitrants. In a speech at Howrah in 1909, Aurobindo said the samitis sprang from three roots. There were firstly the young men working as volunteers at Congress or provincial conference sessions. Then there were the associations for social service for helping the poor and the sick. Finally, there were the physical culture societies. (Quoted by Sumit Sarkar in *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal—1903-1908*). With the promulgation of the Criminal Law Amendment Act in January 1909, popularly known as the Samiti Act, five samitis were declared illegal. They were *Anusilan Samiti* of Dacca, *Swadesh Bandhab Samiti* of Barisal, *Brati Samiti* of Faridpur, and *Suhrid Samiti* and *Sadhana Samaj* of Mymensingh.

33. Nana Sahib, one of the leaders of 1857 revolt, was the adopted son of the last Peshwa Baji Rao II. The British Government denied him his father's pension of Rs. 8 lakhs. Dr. Tara Chand says in his *History of the Freedom Movement in India* that Nana lived as an independent nobleman given to social pursuits, amusements and entertainments. When confronted with the dilemma presented to by the uprising, he chose reluctantly to throw in his lot with the insurgents. But although recognised as their political head, the real authority lay in other

hands. Driven by defeats to the Nepal border he refused to surrender and declared : "There will be war between me and you as long as I have life, whether I be killed or imprisoned or hanged. And whatever I do will be done with the sword only." Thereafter he disappeared for ever in the jungles of Nepal.

34. Annual festivals in honour of Shivaji were started by Tilak to foster feelings of opposition to the Government. The first *Shivaji Utsava* in Calcutta was organised by Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar. The Calcutta festival in June 1906 was attended by Tilak. The Shivaji festival was first held on 15 April 1896.

35. Kerr has described Tilak as the most important extremist agitator in India. He started the *Kesari*, a Marathi weekly, in 1880. Among extremist organs the *Kesari* occupied the foremost place, said a Bombay Government report in 1907. In 1908, a case was started against Tilak allegedly for writing in defence of the bomb in the *Kesari*, and a sentence of six years' imprisonment was passed. It was regarded too risky to keep him in India and he was transported to Burma. He was confined in the Fort in Mandalay. The savage sentence evoked strong resentment and the police resorted to firing on several occasions, killing 15 persons and wounding more than 30.

36. Parshottam Krishna Guruji.

37. Kalidas made its appearance in 1900 ; it came out just after a visit to the city of Tilak.

38. Barindra came to Calcutta shortly after Aurobindo had sent to the city Jatindra Nath Bandopadhyaya (later Niralamba Swami) in 1901 to preach revolution. They met, among others, Surendranath, Swami Vivekananda, P. Mitra, C. R. Das and some members of the Tagore family. Several small *samitis* sprouted throughout Bengal during this period. The first secret society in Calcutta was set up in 1902 near Raja Bazar Tram Depot under Jatindra Nath's leadership. After some time Jatindra Nath and Barindra fell out and Jatindra Nath left in disgust. He later took to *Sannyas*. Barindra was in Bengal till the middle of 1903 when he went to Baroda. He returned to Bengal in 1904.

39. The sales of Manchester cloth in eight districts of Jessore, Bogra, Dacca, Nadia, Burdwan, Malda, Arrah and Hazaribagh fell from Rs. 77,000 in September 1904 to Rs. 10,000 in September 1905. Imports from foreign countries showed a decline of 16 per cent and Liverpool salt a decline of 6,000 tons.

40. Kerr's estimate of Bepin Chandra Pal (1858-1932): Born about 1858, he belongs to Sylhet district. He went to England, and on his return to Calcutta in 1904 he started the *New India* paper which was at first moderate but gradually became seditious. When it failed he joined the staff of Aurobindo Ghose's *Bande Mataram*. In 1905 and 1906 he addressed numerous boycott meetings, at which he made inflammatory speeches, in Calcutta and throughout Bengal and Eastern Bengal. He continued this proceeding in 1907, extending the sphere of his operations in February to Allahabad and in April to the Madras Presidency, through which he toured for about a month delivering seditious speeches at many of the principal towns. He was at that time a thorough extremist and his exposition of *Sakti Puja* (The Worship of Power) connects him with the revolutionary movement. In August, 1908, he went to England and first associated there with Savarkar, Chattopadhyaya and others, but about the middle of 1909 he began to withdraw from the front rank. On his return to India in October, 1911, he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment for sedition as editor of the *Swaraj* magazine which he had published while in England. Since then he has not been so conspicuous. His writings and speeches on the subject of Indian Nationalism are strongly expressed and will repay perusal.

41. To prevent the Congress from passing the boycott resolution the moderates invited Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, to preside over the Calcutta session. Naoroji was held in the highest respect by all parties. But the extremist leaders insisted upon the adoption of their proposals. After a battle in the Subjects Committee of the Congress a compromise resolution was accepted in the open session. It declared, 'the boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest

against the Partition of that province was and is legitimate.' The support of the Congress for *Swadeshi* was more forthright ; it approved the effort to promote the growth of indigenous industries 'even at some sacrifice.' Dadabhai Naoroji tried to placate both parties. He took the country a stage further by declaring in his presidential address that *Swaraj* was the goal of India's struggle. The Moderates understood by this term a form of Government on the model of the Dominions functioning within the British empire. For the Extremists it meant self-government within the empire if possible, outside it if necessary. —(*History of the Freedom Movement in India*. vol. III—Dr. Tara Chand).

42. The Moderates had selected Ras Behari Ghosh as their candidate for presidentship of the session. At the open session Tilak opposed it. This caused an uproar and the session had to be adjourned for the day. Next day Tilak was not allowed to speak. Some delegates tried to push him. A shoe was hurled at Ras Behari Ghosh which missing him, hit Surendra Nath Banerjea and Pherozshah Mehta. At the request of Mehta the pandal was cleared by the police. The Congress was split. A hilarious description of the stormy session has been given by Barindra Kumar Ghosh in his autobiography. Sri Aurobindo has said that "it was I (without consulting Tilak) who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress."

43. In his autobiography Barindra Kumar Ghosh has said that while the Nationalist convocation and the Moderate Congress was in session at Surat, he got together some Marathi, Punjabi, Madrasi and Bengali revolutionary leaders at a secret meeting. Tilak refused to attend the meeting from which nothing came out.

44. Kerr says one of the points against Aurobindo in the Maniktolla conspiracy case was the celebrated "sweets" letter. Among his belongings when his house was searched was found the following notes :

Bengal Camp, Near Ajits
27th December, 1907

Dear Brother,

Now is the time. Please try and make them meet for our conference, We must have *sweets* all over India ready made for imergencies (sic). I wait for your answer.

Your affectionate,
Barindra K. Ghose

In acquitting Aurobindo the judge held the letter would not have been written by Barin. Though the document was in fact in Aurobindo's house on the 2nd May, it is of so suspicious a character that I hesitate to accept it. "Experience tells us that in cases when spies are employed documents do find their way into the houses of suspected persons in a manner which cannot be explained by the accused."

45. Pramathanath Mitra (1853-1910) went to England at the age of 15 to prepare for the ICS. He was called to the bar. An extremist, he believed that independence could be achieved not through negotiation but through force. He was one of the pioneers of the revolutionary movement in Bengal. He joined the *Anusilan Samiti* founded by Satish Chandra Bose in Calcutta in 1902 and was organiser of the *Samiti* in Dacca. He appeared on behalf of the defendants in the Alipore bomb case. Sri Aurobindo has written that P. Mitter had a spiritual life and aspiration and a strong religious feeling : he was like Bepin Pal and several other prominent leaders of the new nationalist movement in Bengal, a disciple of the famous Yogi Bejoy Krishna Goswami, but he did not bring these things into his politics.

46. Count Okakura first came to India in 1901 to invite Swami Vivekananda to Japan. Okakura remained in India for some time and worked in close association with Sister Nivedita for spreading the idea of an Asian renaissance. Arun Chandra Guha writes in his *First Spark of Revolution* : "Nivedita and

Okakura had some part in persuading Abanindranath Tagore to take to his new technique of oriental art. These two also encouraged Acharya Jagadish Chandra in his pursuit of science against the heavy odds placed by the Government and by British scientists. It is not certain whether Jagadish Chandra knew what Okakura and Nivedita were doing in the political field ; but it can be presumed that he also gave his faint support to what was in the offing. Another member of the Tagore family, Surendra Nath Tagore, took a direct part in this movement." While in India, Okakura wrote his famous book, *The Ideals of the East* which Nivedita edited.

47. Jatindra Nath Mukherjee (1880-1915), known as Bagha Jatin because he had killed a tiger with a knife, was one of the legendary heroes of the revolutionary movement. One of his youthful followers was Narendranath Bhattacharya, famous as M. N. Roy. Arrested for complicity in the killing of Shamsul Alam and also in the Howrah conspiracy case, he was acquitted in 1911. He arranged supplies of arms and ammunition from Japan, Germany, U.S.A. and Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). In September 1915 he went to Balasore in Orissa to take delivery of arms and ammunition from the German ship *Maverick* on a lonely stretch on the sea coast. The party was intercepted by police at Kaptipoda and in the encounter Jatin was seriously injured. He died in hospital the next day. M. N. Roy has included Jatin Mukherjee among the eminent men he met in his eventful career in four continents. He summed up : "I have had the privilege of meeting many outstanding personalities of our time. These are great men : Jatinda was a good man, and I have still to find a better... Good men are seldom given a place in the galaxy of the great. It will continue to be until goodness is recognised as the measure of genuine greatness "

48. Shamsul Alam was the police officer who conducted the Alipore case. A deputy superintendent of police, Alam was shot dead on 24 January 1910 while he was going up the stairs of Calcutta High Court. The assassin was Biren Datta Gupta, a youngman of 19, who was hanged on 21 February 1910. Under third degree interrogation, Biren had admitted that he was

commissioned by Jatin Mukherjee. Mukherjee was then an undertrial prisoner in Howrah jail.

49. Jatindranath Banerji (1877-1930) is regarded by many as the founder of the revolutionary movement in Bengal. Convinced that India could not be freed without armed rebellion he tried to get enlisted in the army for securing training in arms. In 1899 he went to Baroda and enlisted in the 4th Baroda Infantry as Jatindar Upadhyaya. After a year he was transferred to the Cavalry branch and put into the Gaekwar's Bodyguard. There he became a great friend of Madhava B. Jadav, the Adjutant of the Bodyguard, and also of Aurobindo Ghosh who lived in Jadav's house. Kerr says that after two years at Boroda Jatin resigned the Bodyguard and went to Calcutta where he put his ideas into practice by setting up a school for physical culture and Bicycle Riding in Circular Road, and while engaged in this he gave his pupils the benefit of his political views. On his father's death in 1903 he became a *sanyasi*, adopting the name Niralamba Brahmachari, and went round the holy places in the Himalayas, Nepal, Tibet and Garhwal, ending up in 1906 at Almora in the United Provinces. He then wandered on to the Punjab, Peshawar and Kashmir returning home to Channa in December 1907.

50. *Anusilan Samiti* was founded in Calcutta on 24 March 1902. It was first named as *Bharat Anusilan Samiti* which was later shortened into *Anusilan Samiti* by P. Mitter. Among Mitter's associates was C. R. Das.

51. Kerr says there was some evidence connecting Jatin Banerji with the Manicktala conspiracy, amongst other things a drill-book found in the garden bearing the name and date "M. B. Jadav, 17-1-97," and he was put on trial but discharged. The similarity of the career of this militant monk with that of Upendra Nath Benerji, the preceptor of the Manicktala institution, is very striking, and it illustrates well the combination of religion and politics on which the revolutionary movement centred in the Manicktala garden was based. It also indicates the extent to which the Calcutta conspirators were indebted to Baroda.

52. Kerr says Pandit Mokhoda Charan Samadhyaya was born in 1874. Son of Shyama Charan Kashnabis of Paikpara, Dacca, he usually resided in Benares and Calcutta. After the death of Brahma Bandhab Upadhyaya he became manager of the *Sandhya*. He was a professor of National College, Calcutta, "and the adviser and harbourer of the *Jugantar* gang of revolutionary dacoits." He was prosecuted in the Bighati dacoity case in 1909 but acquitted. He was again charged with harbouring four of the 'dacoits', but acquitted by a Howrah jury. He returned to Dacca in February 1910. In 1911 he was back in Calcutta, and strongly suspected in connection with the murder of head-constable Suresh Chakravorti. He returned to Benares in 1911, and in 1913 he was prosecuted there in an "insurance fraud" case. He was convicted in 1914 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

53. *Sandhya* of Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya was an evening daily which, it is said, was the first mass paper in India. It was written in colloquial language, it had a large readership among the lower middle classes.

54. *Jugantar* was a weekly edited by Bhupendranath Dutta, who has recorded that to compete with the *Sandhya*, the *Jugantar* took from the beginning an extremist line. The paper was more militant than all the papers in the country. When it came out in March 1906 its circulation was less than a score. Within a year its circulation rose to 7000 and later it went up to 20,000, which, in those days was a very high figure indeed.

55. Abinash Chakravarti (1874-1938) and Annada Kaviraj were the organisers of the *Jugantar* group in North Bengal. He was among the founders of the party.

56. A prominent leader of the movement, he was arrested on the basis of a statement made by Barin Ghose to the police. A. C. Guha says in *First Spark of Revolution* that Barin's statement was resented by some of the accused in the Alipore Conspiracy Case. Gosain took it particularly to heart. "He (Gossain) also made a statement and subsequently turned an approver. He belonged to a rich and aristocratic family of Serampore ; perhaps he was not up to the desired standard in

moral strength. Yet it may be safe to presume that the shock he had received on Barin's confession contributed greatly to his turning an approver. In the course of the trial Kanailal Dutt and Satyen Bose killed Gosain. How the fire-arms were smuggled into Alipore jail, then known as Harinbari jail, still remains a mystery.

57. Subodh Chandra Mullick (1879-1920) was actively connected with the movement. He was among the first rank of leaders against whom action was taken under the Bengal Regulation II¹ of 1818 which permitted detention without trial for an indefinite period. He was one of the three leaders of the *Jugantar* group who, in a secret 'trial', decided that Kingsford should die. The other two members of the "court" were Aurobindo and Charu Chandra Dutta.

58. One of the big zamindars of Bengal who remained actively connected with radical parties for long.

59. Charu Chandra Dutt was one of the members of the secret "court", set up by the *Jugantar* group, which had decided that Kingsford must die. The other two members of the Court were Aurobindo and Subodh Mullick. In his reminiscences Dutt has written that he agreed to sit for the Civil Service examination in England because it would give him an opportunity to get military training in England itself. Despite his close connection with the revolutionary movement he remained a civil servant till retirement.

60. Prafulla Kumar Chaki *alias* Dinesh Chandra Roy (1888-1908) was sent along with Khudiram Basu to kill Kingsford, then Session Judge at Muzaffarpur in Bihar. The bomb thrown by them at Kingsford's carriage on 30 April 1908 killed a European lady, Mrs. Kennedy and her daughter. Mr. Kennedy was a leading lawyer of Muzaffarpur. Ironically, he was one of the few Europeans who had identified themselves with the Congress movement and had on one occasion presided over a session of the Bengal Provincial conference. Both Khudiram and Prafulla fled. Khudiram was arrested at Waini station and was hanged on 19 August 1908. Prafulla was spotted by a police officer, Nandalal Banerji, who tried to arrest

him at Mokamah station platform on May 2, 1908. Rather than be arrested, Prafulla shot himself. Nandalal was shot dead by revolutionaries in a Calcutta lane in November 1908. The Lt-Governor was Sir Andrew Frazer.

61. Bejoy Chandra Chatterjee—B C. Chatterjee, like C. R. Das, was connected with all the civil revolutionary groups in Bengal. He was on the common editorial board of *Jugantar Sandhya*, *Navashakti* and *Bandemataram*. He was the spokesman of the *Anusilan* group before Montagu, then Secretary of State for India in 1917. In later life he was a leader of the *Hindu Mahasabha*.

62. Surendra Nath Banerjee has written in his *A Nation in Making* :

One evening a few months after the Barisal affair, two young men called at my residence at Barrackpore and wanted to have a private interview with me. As I entered the room and took my seat, they said that it was an exceedingly delicate and difficult matter, and they wanted the doors to be closed. Three of us were now closeted in the room, and one of the young men who, it appeared, was a medical student, began the conversation. He said, 'We have come to ask your advice upon a matter of the utmost importance. We have formed a plan to shoot Sir Bampfylde Fuller ; and we are going to—to-night for this purpose. What do you say about it ?' Not being prepared for it, and the proposal being so unusual, I was a little staggered. I said, "Why do you want to shoot Sir Bampfylde Fuller ? What has he done ?" The young man replied with evident emotion, 'His Gurkhas stationed at Banaripara have been outraging some of our women, and we want to take revenge upon him.' I said, 'You are bound to be caught and hanged.' They said, 'We will take our chance and if need be suffer for the honour of our women.'

No position, one might well imagine, could be more difficult than mine. Here were two young men, determined to avenge the honour of their women in the belief that the law would give them no remedy, and they had to be dissuaded from their purpose. At that time, fortunately for me, there was a strong

rumour, which I believed to be well-founded, that Sir Bampfylde Fuller had resigned. I said to them, 'Do you know that Sir Bampfylde Fuller has resigned? What is the good of shooting a dead man? On the other hand, your attempt would be attended with imminent risk to the public interest. We all want to get rid of him as Lieutenant-Governor. If your attempt fails — and you cannot be sure that it will succeed — his resignation is bound to be withdrawn, and he will continue in office. Do you want to do this disservice to your country?'

That was a settler. The young men at once agreed to drop the idea and abandon the proposal. I clinched the matter by saying that they must swear to do so by laying their hands on my Brahminical feet. They readily responded to my appeal, and I heaved a sigh of relief. There was yet a difficulty. They said they must go to the place at once by the night train and stop the arrangements. But they had no money with them. I readily advanced the money they wanted. I did not know who they were; up till now I do not know who they are. I never asked their names. But I felt I could trust them, and, sure enough the money was refunded to me through the post office.

The incident indicated the ideas that were in the air, the deeper undercurrents that were moving, it might be unconsciously, some of the young men of Bengal. With anarchism no one can have any sympathy. Murder is murder, no matter by what name the deed is sought to be palliated, or by what motives excused. But let not the historian of the future lose sight of the atmosphere of mistrust, of hopelessness and helplessness, created by the acts of an administration which no British historian can refer to without a blush on his countenance. (*A Nation in Making*, P. 33-34)

63. Reference is to the Surat session of the Indian National Congress in which Surendranath was hit by a slipper thrown by an extremist delegate.

64. Athanasius Apurbakumar Ghose was one of the four pioneers of Labour movement in Bengal. The other three were Aswini Coomar Banerji, Prabhatkusum Roychaudhuri and Premtosh Bose. Sumit Sarkar says in *The Swadeshi Movement*

in Bengal that Ghosh, a barrister, labour leader and virtually the lone Christian among top *Swadeshi* figures was a firm believer in socialism. While studying law in England Ghosh had spoken on Socialism from a hundred platforms. "He was one of the leading figures in the last Indian Railway strike of 1906, and according to Government reports had come to be known as the 'printers' king' through his role in organising the pressmen. A. C. Banerji refers to him as one of the twelve leading extremists of Bengal. His political ideas seem interesting from the little we can know about them through Bhupendranath Dutta. Though a personal friend of P. Mitter, Apurbakumar never became a member of the *Anusilan*, and strongly opposed individual terrorism. He believed rather in mass civil disobedience."

65. Aswinicoomar Banerji (1866-1945) studied law in England, and on returning to Calcutta soon established himself as a successful barrister. He married a grand-daughter of Debendranath Tagore. Sumit Sarkar writes that with the beginning of the boycott movement Aswinicoomar shot into prominence as a defender of *Swadeshi* cases, a fiery orator, and a man of considerable independence and imagination. Sarkar quotes a report of the then Inspector-General of Police, C. Stevenson Moore which says that Banerji threw himself heart and soul into the strike movement, taking an active part in the Burn, press, tramway and jute mill strikes of the autumn of 1905. "He and Bepin Chandra Pal...are undoubtedly the most dangerous among the agitators"

66. Premtosh Bose was one of the 53 persons whom the Bengal Government wanted to deport in February 1910. Sumit Sarkar quotes a police dossier which says that "Premtosh was one of the chief engineers of the strikes in the Government printing presses and the strike at Messers Burn and Co. and in all the strikes in EIR as well as the Calcutta dock strike in 1907. He was closely associated with the Hindusthan Central Co-operative Bureau and the Hindusthan Co operative Insurance which were said to be "business establishments of the revolutionary movement." Bose's last years were spent in England.

Sarkar has recorded that it is not known on what basis the police report charged Premtosh with misappropriation of union and insurance funds

67. The Anti-circular Society was formed in November 1905 to resist a circular issued a month earlier by Mr. Carlyle, Chief Secretary of Bengal. The circular was particularly directed against rebellious students. The circular asked teachers to take disciplinary action against any student participating in political activity. A similar circular was issued by Mr. Lyons, Chief Secretary of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Another circular, known as Risley's circular, was issued by the Government of India.

68. One of the nine important leaders of Bengal arrested under Regulation III of 1818. Sachindraprasad was a 4th year student of City College when the Anti-circular Society was formed. He was the principal organizer of the society. But its real leader was Krishnakumar Mitra whose daughter he married.

69. Surendranath has reported the incident in detail in his *A Nation in Making*. He says that it was apprehended that the police would interfere and even use force ; but it was strictly enjoined that in no circumstances were the delegates to retaliate and that they were not to carry lathis or even walking-sticks with them ... The procession was to start at about 2 p. m. ... We were allowed to pass unmolested. It was when the younger delegates, the members of the Anti-circular Society, emerged from the 'haveli' into the public street that the whole programme of the police was developed, and the attack was begun. They were struck with regulation lathis (fairly thick sticks, six feet long) ; the *Bande Mataram* badges that they wore were torn off. Some of them were badly hurt, and one of them, Chittaranjan Guha, son of Babu Manoranjan Guha, a well-known *Swadeshi* worker and speaker, who afterwards was deported, was thrown into a tank full of water, in which, if he had not been rescued, he would probably have found a watery grave. The young men had done nothing ; they had not even before the assault uttered what to the Government of

East Bengal was an obnoxious cry, that of *Bande Mataram*..... It was difficult to conceive a more wanton and unprovoked assault.

70. Sumit Sarkar quotes the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of 19 August 1905 as reporting : "Handbills are being circulated to inform the masses that foreign salt is purified by bullock's blood, and calcined bones of cats, dogs and swine, and a similar charge was made about *bideshi* sugar." The newsitem seriously worried British commercial and government circles.

71 The role of the Brahmins in the movement is emphasised in the first Fortnightly Report from Bengal, dated 17 September 1906 : "As regards the mufassal, the districts where the agitation has now the strongest hold are Nadia and the Kalna sub-division of Burdwan. In both cases, the strength of the agitation appears to be due to the fact that the Brahmans in those places have taken a leading part in the agitation and have placed great social pressure on persons otherwise indifferent"—Quoted by Sumit Sarkar.

72. The priests of the Jagannath temple at Puri also banned *bideshi* goods.

73. Founded by Swami Vivekananda on 5 May 1899, the Ramakrishna Math was shifted to Belur in 1899 and it became the headquarters of the whole organisation. The Ramakrishna Mission then ceased to function, but later, a separate organisation called Ramakrishna Mission was set up under the control of the Trustees of the Belur math.

74. The Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayananda (1824-1883) was an instrument of militant nationalism. The *Swadeshi* movement in the Punjab had three prominent leaders. Two of them, Pandit Chandrika Dull and Munshi Ram (later known as Swami Shraddhananda) belonged to the Arya Samaj. Founded in Bombay in 1875, the Arya Samaj made rapid progress. Its branches were founded in the greater part of northern India, in the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan especially. Its greatest contribution was to evoke a sense of pride in India's past and to stimulate a militant enthusiasm for the propagation of the Aryan faith.

75. Ker says in his *Political Trouble in India* that a political¹ dacoity was committed at the station master's office at Chingripota ; over Rs. 600 were robbed from the safe. But the incident is not mentioned in the Sedition Committee report.

76. On 20 July 1910, fortysix accused were committed for trial by the High Court on several charges, including conspiracy to wage war against the King-Emperor. The place of the conspiracy was said to be Sibpur in Howrah district. The accused were divided into 12 groups : Sibpur, Karchi, Kidderpore, Chingripota, Mazilpur, Haludbari Krishnnagar, Nator, Jhaugacha, Jugantar, Chatra, Bhandar and Rajshahi, (Rampur Boalia). The court acquitted most of the accused, mainly on the ground that their connection with this particular conspiracy was not proved. The court convicted only six of the accused, holding they were guilty of taking part in the Haludbari dacoity.

77. Mr. Allen was shot in the back, not fatally.

78. The riots started in Jamalpur where in the annual Janmashtami fair about 100 volunteers destroying some foreign-made goods, were attacked by Muslims. The rioting rapidly spread to other areas. The riots were of political origin for the Muslims were in favour of partition.

79. Among the revolutionary leaders who went to Mymensingh from Calcutta were Bepin Ganguli, Haris Sikdar, Nikhil Roy Maulik, Indra Nandi, Sudhir Sarkar and Pravash Dey. They carried some revolvers and pistols.

80. Chhatra Bhandar was started as a business concern in August 1906 in a house on College Street. It was later shifted to Harrison Road. The Bhandar was a meeting place of young revolutionaries, and it played a very important role in the functioning of Jugantar as a secret revolutionary organisation.

81. On 15 December 1907 a clash occurred between the extremists and the police in Beadon Square. In consequence, an order under Section 144 Cr. P. C. prohibiting meetings in five public squares in north Calcutta was promulgated.

82. Hem Chandra Das was sent to France to learn how to make bombs. He learnt it from a Russian anarchist, Nicolas Safranski. An ex-officer of Engineers, Safranski possessed a

manual on the manufacture and use of explosives. The bomb manual found in Manicktola Garden was a translation of Safranski's. Das became the bomb expert of Manicktala. He was sentenced to transportation for life in the Manicktola Conspiracy Case.

83. Paresh Chandra Moulik, who hailed from Rangpur (now in Bangladesh), was intimately connected with the Swadeshi movement from the beginning. Ker writes that in 1905 Moulik and several other youths were expelled from the district school for refusing to pay fines of Rs. 5 each, imposed on account of their shouting *Bande Mataram* in the street and attending political meetings. These youths formed the nucleus of the Rangpur National School. In 1906 he went to Calcutta and joined the Manicktolla gang. He was sentenced to seven years' transportation in the Manicktolla Conspiracy case, but released in December, 1911, on the occasion of the Coronation Darbar.

84. Before going to Mazaffarpur as a Judge, Kingsford was Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta. He was "sentenced to death" in a "secret trial" by the leaders of the Jugantar group for ordering the flogging of Sushil Sen, a boy, who had shouted "Bande Mataram" in Kingsford's court. Kingsford sentenced Sushil to 15 strokes of the lash and his public flogging was personally supervised by Kingsford. About this outrage A. C. Guha writes : "This incident, particularly because of the tender age of Sushil and the barbarity of public whipping, created a wave of resentment all over the country. After this incident, Kavyavisharad composed his famous song, "Make me forget my mother by flogging me : Am I such an unworthy son of the Mother ?"

85. Ullaskar Dutt hailed from Brahmanbaria of Comilla district, now in Bangladesh. He was the bomb expert of Manicktolla Garden Society before Hem Chandra's arrival from Paris. In the Alipore case he, along with Barindra, was sentenced to death by the Sessions Court. The High Court reduced the death sentence to transportation for life. Upendranath Banerjee writes in his autobiographical tract "Nirbasiter

Atmakatha" that on hearing of the death sentence Ullaskar returned to jail laughing and commented, "I feel immensely relieved." A European sentry, on seeing this, told a colleague, "Look, look, the man is going to be hanged and he laughs!" His colleague, an Irishman, replied, "Yes, I know, they all laugh at death." Ullaskar was so tortured in the Cellular jail in the Andamans that he turned insane.

86. The Sedition Committee report says that on 11 April 1908, a bomb containing amongst other ingredients picric acid was thrown into the house of the Maire of Chandernagore. The bomb exploded but no one was injured. Chandernagore, then a French possession had got an "ordinaire" passed prohibiting this traffic. The committee quotes a report by a special officer in 1907 which says : "In 1906 only two guns and six revolvers were imported by natives in Chandernagore, whilst in the first half of 1907, 34 registered parcels, believed to contain revolvers, were received from St. Etienne, the Government Arms Factory in France. Twentytwo of these parcels were addressed to one Kishor Mohan Shampui, of which 16 were taken delivery of by the addressee ; the remaining six not being claimed by him. apparently owing to the proposed introduction of the Arms Act in French Chandernagore, were returned to the makers by the following mail.....Our further inquiries in this connection show that four of these revolvers were sold to Barin Ghosh and Abinash Bhattacharji of the Manicktola Garden through Ban Bihari Mandal, a mutual friend of Barin and Abinash, who were at that time frequent visitors to Chandernagore.

87. Born in 1879, Upendra Nath was sentenced to transportation for life in 1909. Released after 12 years, he took to journalism. Before being the editor of the *Basumati*, a Bengali daily, he worked in the *Forward*, the *Liberty* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. He died in 1950. Describing Upendra Nath as a leader of the Manicktala group Ker writes that Upendra Nath had studied Hindu and Western Philosophy for two years in an Ashram near Almora in the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh). Returning home in 1905 he became a schoolmaster, and while thus employed he says "I took it into my head to serve the

cause of my country by turning out the British Government securing independence for our countrymen." Accordingly he came to Calcutta and joined the staff of the *Bande Mataram* newspaper at the end of 1906. He also began to contribute articles to the *Jugantar* and so got to know Barindra Kumar Ghose who was also a contributor. In July, 1907, he went with Barin Ghose to the Manicktala garden and met some of the conspirators there. About this time he says "I was actuated to free the country from the foreign yoke by starting a religious institution, or joining one, if any such institution existed, because I concluded in my mind that India would never be free until the feelings of the people were touched through moral and religious precepts." From September 1907 to February, 1908, he wandered all through India in search of a *Sadhu* of his way of thinking or a suitable institution, visiting Benares, Allahabad, Bombay, the Ganganath temple near Baroda, Nepal and other places ; but failing in his quest he returned to Calcutta and took up the work of recruiting, along with Barin Ghose, suitable boys for the secret society, and the initiation and education of the younger members. The subjects he taught were political economy, political science, and Hindu religion. In short, he occupied himself in carrying out the scheme laid down by Arabindo Ghose in Bhawani Mandir.

88. In the Maniktala Garden the police arrested 18 persons. Four of them who happened to be employes of the house were not put up for trial.

89. Kanai Lal Datta was about 21 when he was arrested in connection with the Manicktala bomb case. He and Satyendra-nath Basu were sentenced to death for killing Narendra Nath Gossain, an accused in the Manicktala case, who had turned approver and was lodged in the Alipore jail along with Kanai and Satyen. Kanai died on the gallows on 10 November 1908 and Satyen on 21 November the same year. Satyen was not an accused in Maniktala. He was arrested in connection with another case and lodged in Alipore jail.

90. Almost simultaneously with the Alipore case was started the Midnapore Conspiracy Case. About 100 persons,

mostly young men, were put up for trial. including Raja Narendra Lal Khan of Narajole, Upen Maiti, a leading lawyer and Jamini Mullick, a zamindar. The case dragged on for some months. Ultimately the prosecution could not prove the charges, and the case was withdrawn by the Government.

91. Abinash Chandra Bhattacharjee was the publisher of *Bartaman Rananiti*, described by Ker as the principal revolutionary text book. In the Maniktala garden 392 copies of the book were found, and the issue register showed that it was one of the most popular books in the Dacca Anusilan Samiti Library. He was also the publisher of *Mukti Kon Pathe ?* In 1906, Barindra Kumar Ghose, Bhupendra Nath Dutt and Abinash brought out the *Jugantar*, described by Ker as the first and most pernicious of the revolutionary papers of Calcutta. In the Maniktala case he was sentenced to transportation for life for seven years.

92. Bhupendra Nath Dutt, brother of Swami Vivekananda, was prosecuted as editor of the *Jugantar* for two articles appearing in the paper in June 1906. He admitted full responsibility for the articles and was convicted by Mr. Kingsford and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment. On his release he took refuge at the Belur Math and concealed himself there, successfully evading a warrant for his arrest, until his departure for New York where he arrived on 16 August 1908. From there Dutt moved to Berlin. At the end of the First World War he went to Moscow. He returned to India and was one of the organisers of the peasant movement in the country. Sri Aurobindo has however denied that Bhupendra Dutt was editor of *Jugantar*. "Bhupendra Dutt was at the time only an obscure hand in the *Jugantar* office incapable of writing anything important and an ordinary recruit in the revolutionary ranks quite incapable of leading anybody, not even himself. When the police searched the office of the newspaper, he came forward and in a spirit of bravado declared himself the editor, although that was quite untrue. Afterwards he wanted to defend himself, but it was decided that the *Jugantar*, a paper ostentatiously revolutionary advocating armed insurrection, could not do

that and must refuse to plead in a British court. This position was afterwards maintained throughout and greatly enhanced the prestige of the paper. Bhupen was sentenced, served his term and subsequently went to America. This at the time was his only title to fame. The real editors or writers of *Jugantar* (for there was no declared editor) were Barin, Upen Banerji (also a sub-editor of the *Bande Mataram*) and Debabrata Bose who subsequently joined the Ramakrishna Mission (being acquitted in the Alipore case) and was prominent among the Sannyasis at Almora and was a writer in the Mission's journals. Upen and Debabrata were masters of Bengali prose and it was their writings and Barin's that gained an unequalled popularity for the paper,"— Sri Aurobindo On Himself.

93. A leader of the *Jugantar* group.

94. Mr. Beachcroft, who was judge in the Session Court, had been with Aurobindo in Cambridge. The preliminary trial, a very long one, took place before Birley, a young man unknown to Aurobindo.

95. The Sessions Court judgment in the Maniktala case was delivered on 6 May 1909. The court sentenced Barindra Kumar Ghose and Ullaskar Dutt to death, 10 others including Hem Chandra Das to transportation for life, and seven others to minor sentences. Aurobindo Ghose and 16 others were acquitted. On appeal to the High Court, the Chief Justice and Mr. Justice Carnduff, on 23 November 1909 upheld the convictions of Barin Ghose and 11 others, disagreed regarding five and acquitted one ; during the hearing of the case one of the accused had died. The matter of the five accused was referred to a third judge who on 18 February 1910 confirmed the conviction of two and acquitted the remaining three. The final result of the trial was :—(1) Barindra Kumar Ghose—transportation for life, (2) Ullaskar Dutt—transportation for life, (3) Hem Chandra Das—transportation for life, (4) Upendra Nath Banerji—transportation for life, (5) Bibhuti Bhusan Sarkar—transportation for 10 years, (6) Hrishikesh Kanjilal—transportation for 10 years, (7) Indu Bhusan Roy—transportation for 10 years, (8) Sudhir Kumar Sarkar—transportation for 7 years,

(9) Abinash Chandra Bhattacharjee—transportation for 7 years, (10) Poresh Chandra Moulik—transportation for 7 years, (11) Birendra Chandra Sen—transportation for 7 years, (12) Sisir Kumar Ghosh—rigorous imprisonment for five years, (13) Nirapada Roy—rigorous imprisonment for five years, (14) Sailendra Nath Bose—rigorous imprisonment for five years.

Indu Bhusan Roy committed suicide in the Cellular jail in the Andamans and Ullaskar went insane.

96. Ker writes that the matter which aroused most interest in connection with the trial was the acquittal of Arabindo Ghose. Both moderate and extremist politicians in Bengal believed or affected to believe in his innocence ; on the other hand the revolutionary section let it be generally known that if he were convicted the judge, who was believed to be taking leave, would never get away alive. There was certainly in the case against Arabindo Ghose a good deal to explain away.

Ker's contention that Aurobindo was a very important member of the conspiracy was based on among others ---(1) the garden at Manicktala of which Aurobindo was one of the joint owners was being organised on the lines laid down by him in his pamphlet "Bhawani Mandir" ; (2) the "sweets letter" ; and (9) evidence from the notebook found in the garden.

Beachcroft's comment on the *sweets letter* was, "Experience tells us that in cases when spies are employed documents do find their way into the houses of suspected persons in a manner which cannot be explained by the accused."

97. "In the Howrah conspiracy case 50 persons were charged with conspiracy to wage war against the King and with committing various dacoities in the districts round about Calcutta to collect money in furtherance of their scheme. Among the dacoities specified in the charges were Bighati, Raita, Morehal, Netra and Haludbari robberies. That those dacoities actually occurred and were the work of persons of the "bhadrolak" (or respectable) class was the conclusion of the court, though the conspiracy charged was held proved against six only of the accused. These six had already been convicted and sentenced in the Haludbari case. The continuance of the

proceedings under the Criminal Law over a period of 12 months against 50 accused persons was followed by a complete cessation of "bhadrolok" dacoities in the districts around Calcutta, until a notable individual named Jatindra Mukherji became the leader of a party in Western Bengal about 1914"—Sedition Committee Report.

98. Sedition Committee Report says that between June 1908 and the end of the year there were four cases of bombs being thrown into railway carriages near Calcutta. These bombs were, however, not of a formidable character, being enclosed in cocoanut shells. On one occasion, a European gentleman was badly wounded and two others slightly injured. On the other occasions no one was hurt. It may be that the intention was to injure Mr. Hume, the Public Prosecutor, who on one occasion was in the carriage into which the bomb was thrown and on another occasion was in the train but not in the particular carriage. Two other cases of cocoanut bombs being thrown into trains occurred near Calcutta on the 10th February and 5th April 1909. They do not call for further notice. Proceedings under the preventive section of the Criminal Procedure Code were instituted against a certain person and this type of outrage ceased when he was bound over.

99. Not to be confused with M. N. Roy. This less known Norendra Nath was son of Tara Prasanna Bhattacharji of Bhatpara, 24-Parganas. As leader of a gang which committed bomb outrages on the Eastern Bengal State Railways he was bound over for three years under Section 110 of Cr.P.C. in July 1910. This Norendra Nath is the "certain person" to whom the Sedition Committee Report quoted above refers.

100. "On the 2nd June 1908, at Barrah in Dacca district, there took place a serious dacoity with murder. The circumstances of this crime presented most of the characteristics by which dacoities organised by the revolutionaries were thereafter distinguished. A body of about 50 men armed with rifles, revolvers and daggers and wearing masks came in a boat apparently from a considerable distance and attacked the house of a native resident. They took away about Rs. 25,000 in cash and

about Rs. 837 in jewellery. They then returned to their boats which were about 400 yards from the house. The village chaukidar or watchman attempted to stop them. They shot him dead. They then got into their boats, but were pursued by villagers and police on the banks for a great distance. At different times they fired on their pursuers and three more men were killed and several wounded. Three persons were put on their trial for this outrage, but the evidence did not sufficiently identify them, (Sedition Committee Report). Arun Chandra Guha writes that a part of the loot was taken to Pulin Das at Dacca but the major portion was brought to Calcutta and deposited with the Chhatra Bhandar.

101. The Sedition Committee Report says that on the 15th August 1908 and on the 16th September 1908, there occurred dacoities, one at Bajitpur, Mymensingh district, and another at Bighati in the Hooghly district, more than 100 miles away. In both cases a number of young men armed with pistols obtained admittance to houses on the pretence of being police officers conducting a search, and when admitted robbed the premises. In the latter case four men were convicted, of whom two had also been committed for trial on ample evidence in the former case. A conviction having been obtained, this case was not proceeded with against the men convicted. The committee estimated the value of the 'loot' at Bajitpur at Rs. 1,500/- and that at Bighati at Rs. 535/-.

102. Kartik Chandra Dutt was among the organizers of Chhatra Bhandar. He became a leading light of the Jugantar group after the Maniktala Bomb Case. Dutt was one of the accused in the Howrah Conspiracy case.

103. Mr. G. C. Denham, then of the Criminal Investigation Department, was a prominent figure in Maniktala conspiracy and other political inquiries. In 1911 an attempt was made on his life by throwing a bomb into a motor car as it entered Dalhousie Square from Writers' Buildings. The bomb was thrown into a wrong car, and it also failed to explode. One person was caught and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

104. Arun Chandra Guha writes that the "famous Tantrik

Saint, Tara Khepa, used to hold religious classes and discourses on the *Gita* and the *Chandi*. He often openly advocated rebellion against British rule. Upen Banerjee, Hrishikesh Kanjilal, Kanailal Dutta and others gathered round him."

105. Ker writes that Nani Gopal Sen Gupta was one of the most important and dangerous leaders of the Howrah gang and was implicated in the attempt to seduce the 10th Jats. He was prosecuted in the Howrah-Sibpore gang case but acquitted.

106. The reference is to Monoranjan Guha Thakurta who started the Brati Samiti for the "hawking of swadeshi goods and protection of native females from Europeans." He set up a branch of the Brati Samiti in Giridih where he owned mica mines.

107. A. C. Guha writes in his *First Spark of Revolution* : "A controversy has recently been raised as to who supplied the revolvers to Kanai and Satyen and how ? Many claims have been made. We would rather not enter into this controversy ; but to our knowledge most of the claims are based on partial help or some indirect association or simply subsequent possession of the knowledge of how it happened. Two men, both dead, one some years ago and one recently, made no claims. One is Sirish Ghose and the other is Basanta Banerjee, both belonged to Chandernagore, both of them unostentatious, full of humility, and devoted to the cause. From the evidence available to us, we can safely say that these two gentlemen would be fully justified in claiming the credit for actually smuggling the revolver into the Alipore Jail and we have verified it from all possible sources."

108. A.C. Guha says Keshab De and Ananda Prasad Ghose were believed to have been murdered on suspicion of supplying information to the police.

109. Last survivor of the extremist Press in Bengal, *Nayak* was edited by Panchkori Bandyopadhyay.

110. One hand of Charu was crippled and he could not use it properly. The revolver was tied to hand with a string. During his trial he did not defend himself. A young barrister was asked by the Government to defend him but Charu declined the offer.

When he was committed to sessions, he said that he did not want a prolonged trial and that the sooner he was hanged the better.

111. Ashutosh Biswas, public prosecutor, who appeared for the Crown in the case against Kanai and Satyen, was shot on 10 February 1909 in broad daylight and in the presence of a large number of people when he was coming out of the Alipore Court.

112. A. C. Guha writes that Lalit Chakravorty stated that this was done at the instance of Jatin Mukherjee by a young man, Gunendra Gupta, with the help of a revolver stolen from an insurance agent and handed over to Hem Sen of Netra—one of the organisers of Chhatra Bhandar. It was also reported that Naren Bose and Naren Bhattacharya and Bhushan Mitra were also in the conspiracy of this murder. Gunendra was not arrested after this murder.

113. About Rs. 2,300 were looted in this dacoity.

114. The dacoity at Haludbari in Nadia district was committed on 28 October 1909. The dacoity figured prominently in the Howrah Conspiracy case. In the Haludbari case, five persons were sentenced to eight years, one to seven years and one to five years' rigorous imprisonment. The amount looted was Rs. 1,430.

115. The amount looted was Rs. 130.

116. Jatin Hazra and Lalit Chakravorty were the two approvers in Howrah conspiracy case.

117. Ker in his *Political Trouble in India* quotes a letter from Virendranath Chattopadhyay written on 17 June 1910 to a youth named Srikishan of Hyderabad. Chattopadhyaya writes in the letter : "When you go to Calcutta please see my friend Bejoy Chandra Chatterji who will be introduced by Gannu. Speak to him privately about affairs and ask him to introduce you to Sukumar Mitter, son of Krishna Kumar Mitter. Tell him, that is Sukumar, that I am prepared to send rifles from here, but it is necessary to start a secondhand furniture shop in Calcutta or in Chandernagore. We could then keep sending pieces of furniture for a few months containing nothing, but

afterwards containing the required articles. As regards money that (will ?) be sent to Madame Cama, and as regards all instructions it would be best to send them by some trusted friend who may be coming here. As for myself and Rau we had to run away because warrants are out. When you go see Gannu, she will tell you all."

Viren Chattopadhyaya, eldest son of Dr. Aghorenath Chatterji, ultimately became a Communist and died in Moscow. About his early years abroad as a revolutionary Ker writes that Virendranath went to England in 1902 to study for the Indian Civil Service but failed twice ; he became a student of the Middle Temple but was expelled by the Benchers on account of the views expressed by him in a letter to *The Times* of 2 July 1909 in support of Savarkar. While in London he was completely under Savarkar's influence, but in Paris he aspired to become the leader. He is full of imagination, like many Bengalis, and was continually propounding elaborate schemes for revolution which were not of the slightest practical value ; as Madame Cama sometimes said of him he was "all talk and no work."

"Gannu" in the letter quoted was one of his sisters, Mrinalini Chatterji. According to Ker Mrinalini was already known to be an advanced nationalist, and a friend of Miss Kumudini Mitter, editress of the seditious "*Suprabhat*" magazine. Sukumar, mentioned in the letter, is Kumudini's brother, and B.C. Chatterji, a Calcutta barrister well known as an extremist. Another sister of Chattopadhyaya was Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

118. The reference is to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, second of three brothers from what Ker calls a remarkable family. The two elder brothers, Ganesh and Vinayak were prominent agitators in Nasik from 1905. Ker writes that "Both became leaders of the *Mitra Mela*, an association started about 1899 in connection with the Ganpati celebrations. Vinayak prepared a "*Life of Mazzini*" in 1905-06, and after his departure for England in June, 1906 with the help of Shyamaji Krishnevarma, Ganesh was left to supervise its printing and publication. Ganesh was convicted at Nasik and sentenced to transportation for life for sedition on 9 June 1909, and his

brother Vinayak now head of the secret society in England, instigated, apparently in revenge for this, the murder of Sir William Curzon-Wylie on 1 July 1909. The sentence passed on G. D. Savarkar was confirmed by the High Court of Bombay on 18 November 1909, and this was followed by the second act of vengeance also instigated by Vinayak, the murder of Mr. Jackson at Nasik on 21 December 1909. The third brother Narayan, came under some suspicion in connection with the bombs thrown at the Viceroy at Ahmedabad in November 1909, but was not identified. For abetment of the Nasik murder V. D. Savarkar was sentenced to transportation for life; Narayan was also implicated in the case and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

Savarkar was sent to Cellular jail in the Andamans. Later he became president of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha. He was one of the persons arrested in connection with the murder of Mahatma Gandhi but was acquitted.

119. Associated with Aurobindo, Brahmabandhab and Bepin Chandra Pal, Shyamsundar was connected with *Bande-mataram*, *Jugantar*, *Sandhya* and also *Navashakti*. Later he served as an assistant to Surendra Nath Banerjea in editing the *Bengalee* and was the de facto editor of its Bengali counterpart, *Bangalee*. In July 1916 he was arrested and interned under The Defence of India Act as he was, according to Ker, one of the principal advisers of the revolutionary party and was regularly visited by its leaders. He brought out *The Servant* which became a powerful organ and the mouthpiece of the non-co-operation movement.

120. Satish Chandra Chatterjee was a professor of chemistry in Brojo Mohan College. He was secretary of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti. During the early years of the swadeshi movement in Barisal, he was of immense help to Aswini Kumar Dutt. All nine agitators were released in December 1908.

121. The dacoity at Nangla was committed by eight or nine masked men armed with pistols and daggers who took away about Rs 1000 in cash and ornaments. One person was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment in connection

with the dacoity. In the Nangla conspiracy case six persons were transported for seven years, three for five years and two for three years each.

122. Both Sedition Committee report and Ker say that the dacoity at Netra was committed in April 1909 and not in July. SCR gives the date as 23 April while Ker says it was 24 April. The dacoity was committed by masked men with at least three revolvers. The dacoits demanded the keys of the victim, opened his safe and took cash and ornaments to the value of Rs. 2400, saying they were only borrowing it for the purpose of exterminating the English.

123. Tara Nath hailed from Noakhali district. He was a member of the Manicktala group and was sentenced in May 1910 to three years' imprisonment for being in possession of several revolvers and a quantity of ammunition. He was released in October 1912 and went to live in Benares.

124. The Sedition Committee report says that in the month of March action in connection with what is known as the Howrah Conspiracy case began, but it was not until April 1911 that the proceedings terminated with the judgment of the Special Bench appointed under the Criminal Law Amendment Act XIV of 1908.

A. C. Guha writes that among the accused in the case were Jatin Mukherjee, Naren Bhattacharya (M. N. Roy), Tara Nath Roy Choudhury, Nani Gopal Sen Gupta, Hem Chandra Sen, Lalit Chatterjee, Kartick Dutt, Baren Basu, and Charu Ghose. One accused, Satish Sarkar of Rajshahi, remained underground and avoided arrest. Another Charu Charan Ghose of Chetla, who had played an important part in those early days, died in jail during the course of the trial.

One of the charges against the accused in the Howrah case was tampering with the loyalty of the soldiers. Nikhileswar Roy Maulick had contacts with the 10th Jat Regiment posted in Fort William. The contact was first established by Naren Chatterjee, an absconding accused in the Howrah case. As the soldiers were afraid to cross the Ganga to come to Howrah, the contact was maintained by Sarat Mitra of Kidderpore and

the Chhatra Bhandar group. In those days tampering with the loyalty of soldiers was considered a serious charge. Some Jat soldiers were court-martialled after some time.

125. In later life, inventor of Bengali linotype and founder of *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, India's largest circulated daily.

126. A. C. Guha gives a totally different version. He says while Biren was in the condemned cell, awaiting execution, a trick was played on him. Police officers used to visit him occasionally. One day a police officer showed him a paper which purported to say that some important men had denounced him and betrayed him. Biren got excited and said, "I do not care for the opinion of the whole world if I have the confidence of one man and one man only." In his excitement, he lost his power of self-inhibition. The police officer took advantage of it and cajoled him to disclose the name of that one man, and he was no other than Jatin Mukherjee. Somehow he admitted that Jatin had commissioned him to do this task. By that time, Jatin Mukherjee had been arrested and was an undertrial prisoner in Howrah jail. The police brought Jatin before Biren in the Presidency Jail, expecting that Biren would further implicate Jatin. On seeing Jatin, Biren broke down. Jatin consoled him and gave him indications of his affection and confidence. The drooping spirit of Biren revived. Next day Biren was hanged. He walked up to the scaffold with boldness and dignity, confident of the trust and affection of his leader Jatin Mukherjee.

127. Ker writes that in the Khulna case, 16 persons were committed for trial, and there were nearly 300 witnesses. On 1 April 1911, the accused in the Khulna-Jessore case were brought before a special bench of the High Court presided over by Sir Lawrence Jenkins, Chief Justice of Bengal. In consideration of their pleading guilty to the charges, and of their having been in prison under trial for eight months, they were released on their own recognisances to appear for sentence when called upon and to be of good behaviour and keep the peace. This was done at the suggestion of the Advocate-General, acting under instructions from the Government of Bengal; as the accused all pleaded guilty before the suggestion was made, it was clear that the

course which was followed had been agreed upon between the prosecution and the defence.

128. The decisions in Khulna-Jessore and Howrah conspiracy cases were, according to Ker, a heavy blow to the police. In the former, they saw men, admittedly guilty against whom evidence had been collected with the greatest difficulty, released with no more serious punishment than a lecture from the Chief Justice; in the latter the sentences passed appeared to indicate that to make disclosure to the police was regarded by the High Court as an aggravation of the offence.

129. Srish was attached to Calcutta C.I.D. He was a former member of the Jugantar group who had given information to the police in 1908. He was retained as an informer and afterwards enlisted as constable. About a fortnight previously he had received an anonymous letter warning him that he would be shot.

130. Srish was shot dead in Sikdar Bagan Lane, Calcutta, on 21 February 1911, while in the Howrah conspiracy case the judgment of the special tribunal was delivered by the Chief Justice on 19 April 1911. Evidently, Daly is wrong.

131. Jyotish Ghose was arrested on a charge of abetment but as the case was not strong enough he had to be discharged. In January, 1917, he was arrested under the Defence of India Act.

132. The Gondalpara group in Chandernagore included Naren Banerjee, Basanta Banerjee, and Srish Ghosh. This group worked in collaboration with the Prabartak group of Motilal Roy in giving shelter to absconders. Naren was arrested near Gauhati in 1918 while trying to break through a police encirclement.

133. The prognosis proved correct. The Sedition Committee has recorded that early in 1915 certain of the Bengal revolutionaries met and decided to organise and put the whole scheme of raising a rebellion in India with the help of Germans upon a proper footing, establish cooperation between revolutionaries in Siam and other places with Bengal, get into touch with the Germans, and to raise funds by dacoities.

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